Historic England Action Plan
London's Elizabethan and Jacobean Playhouses and Bear Baiting Arenas

Project No. 7096

Research Report

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Executive Summary

This report is intended to support a thematic project, initiated by English Heritage's National Heritage Protection Programme (now the Historic England Action Plan), to consider the archaeological potential of a number of London's Elizabethan and Jacobean playhouses and bear baiting arenas.

The playhouses and arenas under consideration are three theatres – the Theatre, the Curtain and the Hope – and two bear baiting arenas – Bear Garden 3 (Payne's Standing)/3A and Davis' Bear Pit. Together, these sites all have a role to play in the understanding of the entertainments of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, in particular the development of the form of the polygonal amphitheatres and the activities and persons involved in the various spectacles.

The report summarises the historic, documentary and archaeological evidence for each of the five sites, and assesses the significance of each against Historic England's *Conservation Principles* and the Department of Media, Culture and Sport's non-statutory criteria for defining the national importance of heritage assets.

1.Introduction

1.1 Background

Historic England wishes to understand the archaeological significance of several of London's playhouses and bear baiting arenas. These iconic building types are illustrative of the Elizabethan-Jacobean era's 'golden age', and are physical representations of new innovations and thinking in science and literature, entertainment and leisure, trade and global exploration and socio-economic and cultural shifts. This asset type has a particularly strong historic and communal value, and the association of the buildings with notable figures such as Shakespeare, Marlowe and Jonson elevate them as a focus of national cultural identity.

At present, only two of London's thirteen playhouses and arenas have been designated as Scheduled Ancient Monuments, the Rose and the Globe, although the remains of several others have been archaeologically investigated. Five of these – the Theatre, Curtain and Hope playhouses and the Bear Gardens 3 (Payne's Standing) and Davies' Bear Garden arenas have a substantial degree of survival. In recent years, through the application of national and local planning policy in the course of redevelopment, elements of these sites have been preserved in situ.

However, continuous development threat coupled with the significance of the assets, suggests that a more proactive form of protection may be appropriate. Both a quadrant of the Theatre and the entire Curtain site, for example, have been granted planning consent for redevelopment, and both will require further archaeological investigation as part of the development process. The site of the Curtain, in particular, is undergoing active change at the moment, with the demolition of the standing buildings on the site presently underway.

The current owners, developers and agents of both of these sites recognise the value and significance of the archaeological remains, and are actively seeking to preserve, enhance the understanding of and increase access to the assets within the new development areas and buildings. At both schemes the playhouses are considered as a focal attraction of their plans. The current position may change, and the long-term future of the archaeological assets may require more robust protection.

The Southwark examples are situated on London's Bankside in a dynamic regeneration area, and are also potentially subject to development threat. The vulnerability of the remains is heightened by the fact that the Southwark sites are presently in multiple ownership.

1.2 Assessing significance and importance

Understanding the heritage value and significance of a place is the key to enabling informed changes or sustainable management of the heritage assets. The significance of the assets are based upon 'the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest' (*Conservation Principles)*.

People value places for a wide variety of reasons: the physical remains, which tell a story of past peoples and events; the sense of wonder or awe it imparts, and; its role within the community as a place of gathering or memorial. The combination of these tangible, but often more ephemeral, aspects of a place lead to its significance, and what makes it important to the people who use it.

Conservation Principles separates heritage values into four categories:

- **Evidential**: the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- **Historical**: the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.
- **Aesthetic**: the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- **Communal**: the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

The significance of a place can also be assessed using a scale of significance, ranging from very high to neutral or even detrimental, describing elements which detract from the overall significance of a site.

Significance	**Definition**
Very high significance	Indicates features, buildings, themes or elements of a place that are of utmost importance and critical to the understanding and appreciation of a place.
High significance	Indicates features, buildings, themes or elements of a place that are of considerable importance to the understanding and appreciation of a place. Generally includes elements that have been designated and their settings.
Medium significance	Indicates features, buildings, themes or elements of a place that are of some importance and which help to define the historic value, character and appearance of a place. Generally of regional interest, and are often discreet assets.
Low significance	Indicates features, buildings, themes or elements of a place that are of minor importance to the understanding and appreciation of a place, but which may be of local interest.
Neutral significance	Elements of a place, building or landscape which typically do not possess any heritage value, and which neither add nor detract from the overall character and understanding.

Negative significance	Elements of a place, building or landscape that detract from the overall character and understanding.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport provides additional guidance in determining the importance of an archaeological site. This is intended to assist in identifying remains of national importance, whether designated or not (DCMS, *Scheduled Monuments,* 2013), and contains the following criteria:

- Period
- Rarity
- Documentation of the asset's significance (through previous archaeological excavation or contemporary records)
- Group value with other heritage assets
- Survival/condition
- Fragility/vulnerability
- Diversity of attributes the asset holds
- Potential for the asset to tell us more about our past through archaeological investigation.

2 Bankside – Bear Gardens 3 (Payne's Standings)/3A, Davies' Bear Pit and the Hope Playhouse

2.1 Introduction to the bear baiting arenas

Animal baiting – particularly that of bulls and bears – was an enormously popular sport in the Elizabethan and later periods, on a par with the entertainments provided at the playhouse amphitheatres and other more genteel pastimes. Animal baiting, despite a notable growing distaste towards the sport that can be seen in documentary sources from the 17th century onwards, was in fact not banned in the United Kingdom until the passing of the Cruelty to Animals Act, 1835.

The popularity of animal baiting is attested to by numerous documentary sources and accounts. The entertainment was enjoyed across all strata of society, from Elizabeth I and James I, often in the accompaniment of visiting royals and dignitaries, to Walter Raleigh and Samuel Pepys, through to the lower classes. Bear baiting was officially sanctioned to the degree that it was regarded as a royal monopoly, with the Master of the Games a royal appointee. The Master of the Games was responsible for the Yeoman of the Bears, who received licences, for a fee, to host baiting and obtain profit.

An account of bear baiting, provided by Robert Lanham witnessing the entertainments at Kenilworth in 1575, illustrates the then attraction of the baiting.

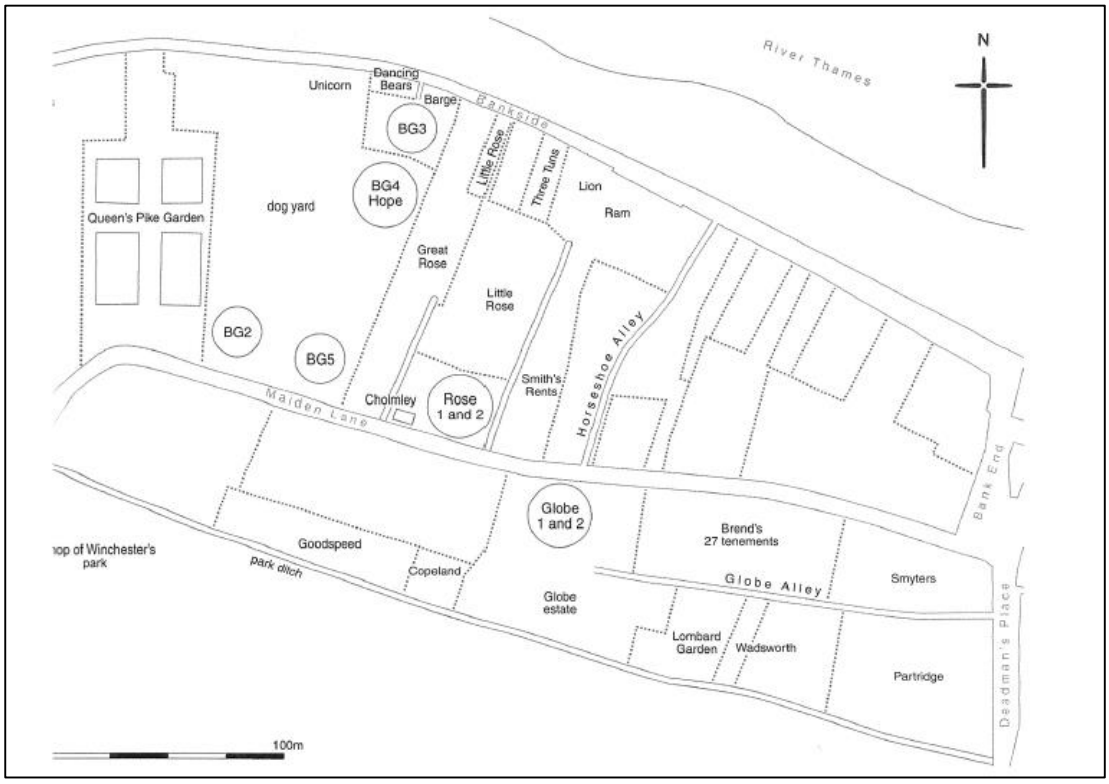
> 'It was a sport very pleasant, of these beasts: to see the bear with his pink nose leering after his enemies' approach, the nimbleness and weight of the dog to take his advantage, and the force and experience of the bear again to avoid the assaults. If he were bitten in one pace, how he would pinch in another to get free; that if he were taken once, then by what shift with biting, with clawing, with roaring, with tossing and tumbling he would work and wind himself from them; and when he was loose to shake his ears twice or thrice with the blood and the slaver hanging about his physiognomy.'

From within London, a 1544 account written by a Spaniard visiting Bankside records:

> 'In another part of the city we saw seven bears, some of a great size; they are led into a circus, where, being tied by a long rope, large and fierce dogs are let loose upon them, to bite and infuriate them. It is not bad sport to see them fight. The large bears are matches with three or four dogs, and sometimes one is victorious and sometimes the other; the bears are ferocious and of great strength; they not only defend themselves with their teeth, but hug the dogs so closely with their forelegs that, if they were not rescued by their masters they would be suffocated. Into the same place they brought a pony with an ape on its back and to see the pony kicking at the dogs, and the ape shrieking

at them as they hang on the ears and neck of the pony, is enough to make you laugh.'

Within London, by the mid-16th century, the Bankside area of Southwark was the usual venue for animal baiting. This area – between modern Park Street and Bankside – had previously been the site of a number of medieval fish ponds, tenement buildings and inns, collectively known as the 'stews,' and was the centre for brothels and prostitution from the 13th – 15th centuries. One of the named stewhouses, the Bell and Cock, which remained in the freehold of the Bishops of Winchester, was located adjacent to one of the bear baiting rings (Bear Garden no. 3/3A), on the Benbow House site, and continued in use concurrently with the animal baiting.

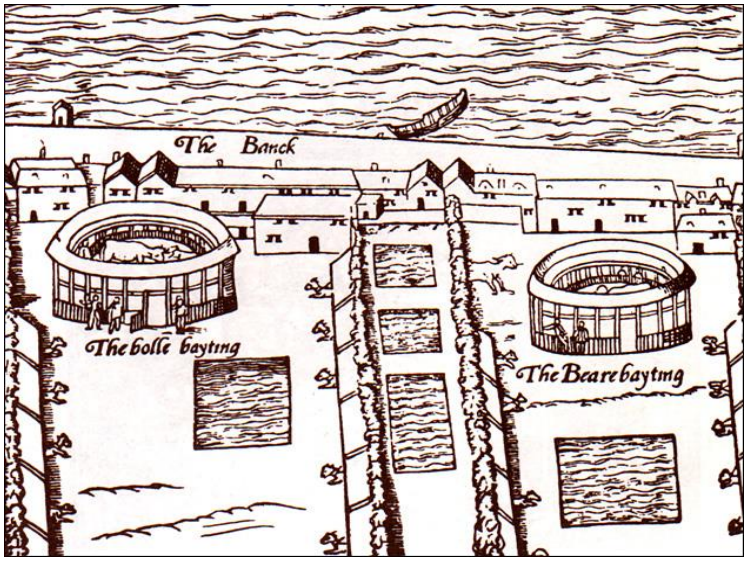


Bankside in the later 16th and 17th centuries, showing the Bear Gardens nos. 2 – 5 (BG). Bear Gardens 1 is further to the west. (reproduced from Bowsher and Miller, 2009)

In total there were five animal baiting arenas built on Bankside. Three were in use by the mid-16th century. The earliest example, Bear Garden no. 1, was situated at 'Masons Stairs on the Bankside,' which was one of the river steps used by the Thames ferrymen. It was located to the north of the Tate Modern, and there is likely to be no archaeological evidence remaining due to later development. The second, Bear Garden no. 2, was, according to John Stow, 'neer Maid Lane (now Park Street) by the corner of Pyke Garden.' This has been interpreted as being to the southeast of the Tate Modern, at the junction of Moss Alley and Park Street. Archaeological work on the site in 1988 (Skinmarket Place, MoL Site Code SIP88) did not find any structural remains

from the bear garden, but a pit of likely Tudor date was excavated that contained several dog skulls, probably associated with the baiting.

Of the three later bear baiting pits, Bear Garden 3/Payne's Standings (later replaced by Bear Garden 3A) was erected before 1540; the Hope Playhouse (Bear Garden no. 4), which had a dual function of a bear baiting arena and a theatre, was built in 1613, and the last of the bear pits, Davies' Bear Pit (Bear Garden no. 5) opened in 1662. These three arenas were all situated in the area contained by the modern Bankside to the north, Rose Alley to the east, Park Street to the south and New Globe Walk to the west. Accordingly, by the 17th century, and possibly much earlier, the general area had become known as the bear gardens, a catch-all term referring to the actual bear baiting pits as well as the associated kennels, sheds and adjoining houses. The place name survives as a local street, Bear Gardens, which runs north-south between Bankside and Park Street.



Agas Map, c 1562

The form of the arenas was dictated by the activities held therein. The earlier bear baiting pits, Bear Gardens nos. 1 – 3, were roughly circular structures, no doubt a response to keeping spectators a safe distance from the bear, chained to the centre of the yard. The central area was surrounded by scaffolding, a single storey in height and roofed, providing standing views at an upper level, although people also stood underneath the galleries at ground floor. This is illustrated in the c. 1562 Agas Map, which also shows the dog kennels, ponds for the washing of bears and the disposal of dead dogs, and adjacent buildings (it should be noted that it is unclear which of the Bear Garden arenas are illustrated in the Agas Map, or to what degree it is an accurate representation; the map may show Bear Gardens no. 1 and no. 3, or Bear Gardens no. 2 and no. 3).

The form of the bear gardens is clearly described in an account of 1583 by the Reverend John Field, a renowned Puritan preacher, writing in response to the collapse of Bear Garden no. 3 (Payne's Standings) which killed seven people and injured many

others. Although Field's writings are an attempt to illustrate God's wrath, thereby demonstrating the immorality of attending such events on a Sunday, the passage provides significant detail on the structure itself.

> 'That upon the last Lords day being the thirteenth day of the first month, that cruell and loathsome exercise of bayting beares being kept at Parrisgarden, in the afternoon, in the time of common praiers,…Being thus ungodly assembled, to so unholy a spectacle…the yeard, standings, and galleries being ful fraught, being now amidest their joilty, when the dogs and bear were in the chiefest Battel, Lo the might hand of God upon the. This gallery at was double, and compassed the yeard round about, was so shaken at the foundation, that it fell (as it were in a moment) flat to the ground, without post or peere, that was left standing, so high as the stake whereunto the Beare was tied. Although some wil say (and it may be truly) that it was very old and rotten and therefore a great waight of people, being plated upon it then was wont that it as no marvaile that it fayled: and would make it but a light matter: yet surely if this be considered that no peece of post, boord, or stake was left standing. In the fal of it, there were slaine five men and two women…Of all the multitude there, which must needed be farre above a thousande, it is thought by the judgement of most people, that not the third personne escaped unhurt…They say also that at first, when the Scaffolde cracked (as it did once or twice) there was a cry of Fire, which set them in such a maze…But it shoulde appere that they were most hurt and in danger, which stood under the Galleries on the ground, upon whom both the waight of the Timbre and people fel…For surely it is to be feared, beesides the distruction bothe of bodye and soule, that many are brought unto, by frequenting the Theatre, the Curtain and such like…'

The bear gardens appear to have been out of use by the mid – late 17th century: the Hope Playhouse (Bear Garden no. 4) was said to have been demolished in 1656, and Davies Bear Pit (Bear Garden no. 5) was dismantled in 1682. The general area of the bear gardens was taken up by glasshouses and potteries, in use from the late 17th century onwards. Today, many of the standing 19th century buildings in the area retain an industrial or warehouse character.

There is a both a direct and indirect association between the bear baiting pits and the playhouses, including the form of the buildings, their physical locations and connections between individuals involved in both enterprises.

2.2 Bear Gardens 3 (Payne's Standings)/3A

Location

Bear Gardens 3 (Payne's Standings)/3A is situated at approximately NGR 532242 180492. The arena is in the southeast corner of the building and office block known

as Benbow House, 24 New Globe Walk, SE1, although is projected to extend to the east into the road, Bear Gardens. The site lies within an Archaeological Priority Area as defined by the London Borough of Southwark.

History, cartographic and documentary sources

There is a substantial documentary record for Bear Gardens 3 (Payne's Standings) and its successor 3A. This is in part due to a series of legal depositions relating to a long running dispute between the Crown and the Bishop of Winchester over ownership of land in the area, dating to 1620. However, much of the evidence presented, although often contradictory, refers to earlier events and provides indirect information on the arena. There are also a number of leases and documentation of property transfers in Bankside, which assist in identifying the location of the arena, the owners and use.

Following Dissolution, the land on which Bear Gardens 3 was located was transferred in 1539/40 from the Bishop of Winchester to William Payne. This included 'certen capytall massauges and tenements called the barge, the bell and the cocke, being upon the banke called the Stewes.' The land was situated 'uppon the bancke called the Stewes…butting and lyinge agaysnt the Kinges highewaie next the water Thames on the north side, and agaynste the tenemente sometymes the ladie of Stretford on the west side, and against a land called Mayden lane on the south side, together wf all the smale howses, gardens and wharffes wth there appurtenaunces.'

Approximate location of Crown land and the Bishop of Winchester's land, with the site of the Benbow House excavations shown in red (Mackinder and Blatherwick, 2009)

On the modern street map, this would include the eastern half of the Benbow House site and the western side of the Riverside House development, and south to the northern boundary of 20 – 22 New Globe Walk. The surrounding land to the west, east and south, was Crown land. This land was leased to Henry Polsted in 1539, who also had an independent interest in bear baiting.

The 1620 court records include evidence to the effect that William Payne lived in a house called the Dancing Bear (the later name for the Barge tenement). Payne, who is known to have died in 1574, is therein said to have built a place to bait the bears near to the house, 'in the outer court towards the Thames northwards from the now Hope playhouse.' Payne himself was, by 1560, deputy to the then Master of the Bears, Cuthbert Vaughan. Payne and a Simon Powlter were later licenced to bait bears until c. 1574, and Powlter was receiving payments as Yeoman of the Bears from at least 1571.

It is uncertain when Payne built Bear Garden 3, described as 'low scaffolds or standings' on the leased land. It could have been erected as early as the 1540s, if the above Spanish account describing the entertainments is describing the site. An account from the 1562 diary of Alessandro Magno recalls the pricing strategy at being a single penny to enter the arena and an additional one to go up into the stands. This indicates there were two tiers of spectators which is consistent with the 1562 Agas Map and Field's 1583 description (above) of the collapse of the scaffolds.

The site of Payne's Standings would have been quite restricted, with the Museum of London estimating that the external diameter of the arena would only have been c. 15 – 18m. It was likely entered from the buildings on Bankside, such as the Bell and Cock inn. A ditch drained southwards towards Maiden Lane (Park Street), to the west of the arena, which was lined with hurdles and covered with boards. The dog kennels were situated to the west, beyond the ditch, along with bear houses, a pond to wash the bears and another to dispose of dead dogs (Mackinder 2013).

William Payne died in October 1574. The previous year, he had assigned the bear houses, the yards and the baiting arena to Edward Wystowe for the remainder of the term of the bishop's lease. Wystowe continued to bait the bears, but in 1578/9 sold the lease with the attendant documentation to hold the games and their profits, which in due course passed to Morgan Pope, Goldsmith of London, who remained as manager of the Bear Gardens until 1590.

In January 1583, as cited above, the scaffolds of Payne's Standings collapsed, killing seven people and injuring many others in the audience – which, if Field's account is accurate – numbered approximately 1,000 spectators.

The arena was swiftly rebuilt, possibly by Pope, but in a new style. Gone were the scaffolds of old, with the replacement Bear Gardens 3A mirroring the Theatre playhouse, in Shoreditch (built 1576), with tiered galleries and a polygonal form. The Bear Garden and activities were described by a visitor to London, Lupold von Wedel, on 23rd August 1584 as follows:

> We went across the bridge to the above mentioned town (Southwark). **There is a round building three stories high, in which are kept about a hundred large English dogs, with separate wooden kennels for each of them.** These dogs were made to fight singly with the three bears, the second bear being larger than the first, and third larger than the second. After this a horse was brought in and chased by the dogs, and at last a bull, who defended himself bravely.

Paul Hentzner, who visited London in 1598, also described the replacement building as:

> '**built in the form of a Theatre, which serves for the baiting of Bulls and Bears;** they are fastened behind, and then worried by great English bulldogs; but not without great risk to the dogs, from the horns of the one, and

> the teeth of the other…to this entertainment, there often glows that of whipping a blinded Bear, which is performed by five or six men, standing circularly with whips, which they exercise upon him without any mercy, as he cannot escape from them because of his chain…'

Morgan Pope continued to operate the Bear Gardens throughout the later 1580s and early 1590s. Pope's interest was passed to Captain Thomas Burnaby in 1590, who in turn leased it onwards to Richard Reve at £120/annum, which included a tenement house, the scaffolds, the dogs and the rights to hold bear baiting, on payment of fees to the Master of the Games.

By December 1594, the lease of the Bear Garden was purchased by Edward Alleyn for the sum of £200, and was also licenced to hold games. His father-in-law, Philip Henslowe, who by then had already built the Rose Playhouse (1587), bought the lease of the tenement properties on which the Bear Gardens was built – the Bell and Cock and the Barge. These properties, as above, were situated to the north of the arena itself, and likely provided access into the games area. He subsequently bought out the leases for part of the Polsted land to the east, known as the Great Rose estate (this is separate from the site of the Rose Theatre, which was the next property to the east, known as the Little Rose estate).

Henslowe and Alleyn attempted to monopolise the bear baiting on the Bankside, and in 1604 eventually obtained the Mastership of the Bears, which meant that they no longer had to pay licences to host the games. This proved a lucrative move, providing several sources of income including leases to surrounding properties, granting licenses to other to bait the bears, profits from the matches and betting, and other fees.

In 1606 Alleyn and Henslowe employed a carpenter, Peter Street, to carry out renovation work on the buildings to the north of the Bear Garden, which included the rebuilding of some of the tenement houses, such as the Bell and Cock inn. Street had previously built the Globe (1599), and in 1600 completed the Fortune, Henslowe's second playhouse after the Rose, demonstrating again the close ties between the bear-baiting arenas and the playhouses.

In 1613 the Bear Garden was demolished, with Henslowe and his new partners Jacob Meade and Gilbert Katherens entering a contract for the replacement with a new building, a joint playhouse and bear baiting arena, the Hope. The new theatre was built to the immediate south-east of the Bear Garden. The raw material from the Bear Garden was reused in the construction of the Hope – with the 'tymber benches seates, slates, tyles Brickes and all other thinges belonginge to the saide Game place or Bull house or stable.'

Following the demolition of the Bear Gardens, the land moved to industrial uses. An indenture of 1671 refers to an existing pottery and glasshouse on or near to the site, as it is clear there were several operations nearby. John Bowles and William Lillington established a new glasshouse, the Bear Gardens Glasshouse, from 1671, with a

particular specialism in Crown Window glass. There were a number of other glasshouses in the immediate area by the early 18th century, producing both bottle and window glass. Various other industrial businesses gradually overtook the area, including a foundry, smithy, various working yards, outbuildings, and residential properties. The site name – Benbow House – is a reference to a foundry on the site owned by James Benbow, which continued to c. 1860. Gradually, the area changed from that of industry and manufacturing to warehouses and storage, which is a character that remains today.

Archaeological evidence

The area of Payne's Standings/Bear Gardens 3A has been subject to archaeological investigation. The most relevant excavations were those carried out by Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) in advance of development at Benbow House, 24 New Globe Walk, Southwark, SE1. The archaeological works, which were carried out in numerous interventions from 1995 – 1999, all under the Museum of London Site Code BAN95. This included areas of bulk excavation of the Benbow House site, along with the preservation in situ of medieval tenement buildings, the remains of the Bear Garden arena and later post-medieval structures.

Also relevant are the sites to the immediate south (20 – 22 New Globe Walk, MOLA, Site Code NGW00) and a watching brief during Thames Water works along Bear Gardens (Bear Gardens, Rose Alley, Emerson Street and Sumner Street, SE1, PCA, Site Code BRZ09).

The relevant archaeological remains on the site begin in the 13th and 14th century, with evidence of land reclamation in the form of crushed chalk stabilising deposits, followed by the remains of nine or ten buildings. These had chalk walls and likely are the remains of the stews – the tenements and brothels – known to be in the area from documentary sources. It is likely that one of the buildings on the north-east corner of the site can be identified as the Bell and Cock inn, as it has later 17th century alterations and is of a size consistent with the documentary evidence.

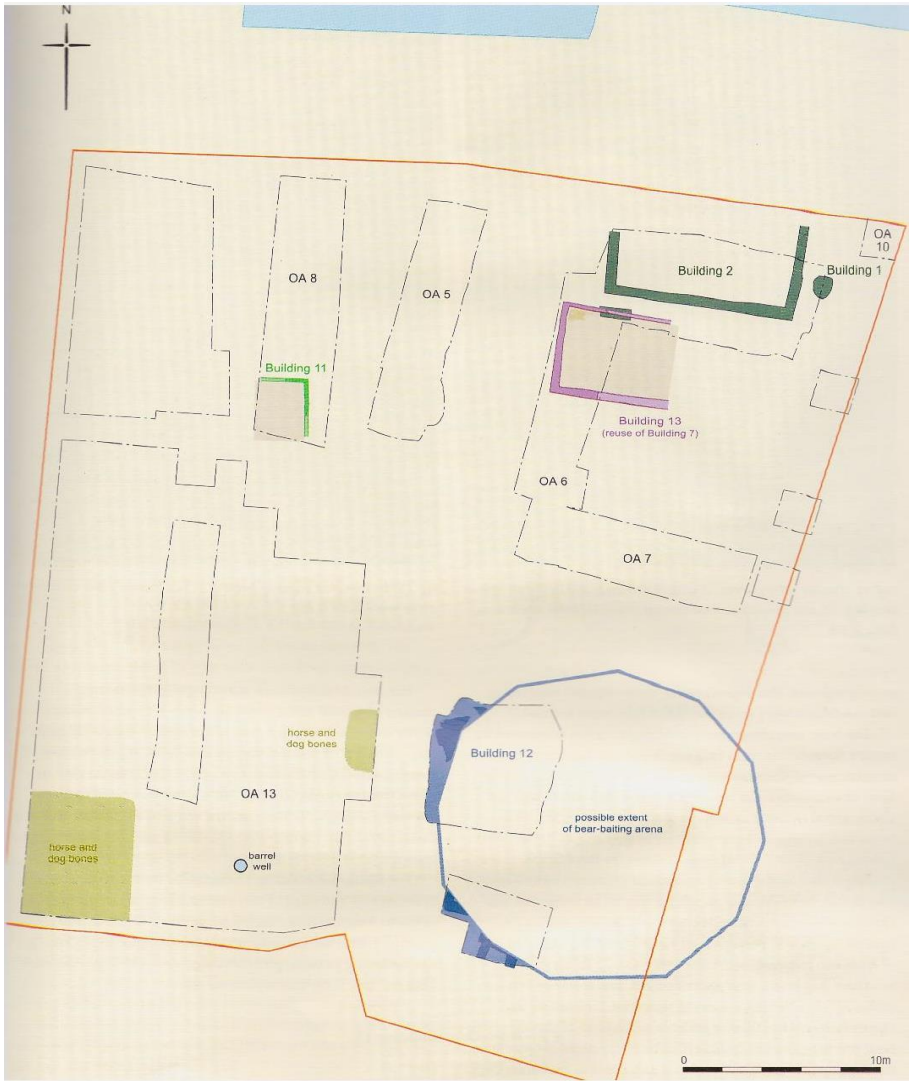
In the south-east corner of the Benbow House site, archaeological investigations uncovered the remains of three timber piles cut into deposits dated to the early 17th century. The piles are clustered together, and survive to a maximum of 1.50mOD. Pottery recovered from a clay deposit sealing the primary post is dated to c. 1580 – 1600. Above the timber piles were two robbed out wall foundations, both with evidence for the removal of brick and chalk walls, which were elliptical rather than straight. Further to the north a similar robbed out wall foundation was observed, although there was no evidence of supporting piles. The robbing events were dated to c. 1640 – 1660 based on clay tobacco pipes. To the north and west of this structure a number of deposits, including a possible surface, were observed that contained significant assemblages of bones which may be associated with animal baiting. These included a large number of horse and dog bones, with substantial evidence for the horses being butchered, possibly to feed the dogs. Interestingly, some of the horse

skulls recovered indicate pulling from reins, which are perhaps indicative of the nature of the entertainments.

The dog bones recovered were mainly from large, mature dogs such as those that would have been used during bear baiting, and may be the remains of dead fighting dogs, all deposited in one discreet area. It has also been suggested that a small and poorly built 16th/17th century structure, in the north-west of the site, may be one of the dog kennels known to have been within the Bear Gardens complex. Other archaeological investigations in the area, such as at 20 – 22 New Globe Walk, immediately to the south of Benbow House (NGW00), have yielded large assemblages of dog, horse and bear skeletal remains, which may derive from one of the nearby ponds, said to be for the deposition of dead dogs. This could be associated with any of the three bear baiting pits in the immediate vicinity.

At Benbow House, the southern area of the site was sealed by glasshouse waste, which further supports a *terminus ante quem* of the mid-17th century or earlier for the building's use and demolition.

The evidence uncovered indicates that the archaeological remains are that of a large, 16th/17th century building constructed on timber piles. The alignment of the robbed out wall foundations indicates that the building was elliptical or polygonal in plan, likely with 12 sides, and was c. 16m in diameter. Dating evidence from the building and the associated contexts, as well as the supporting documentary evidence, suggests that this building may be the replacement Bear Garden 3A, built after the 1583 collapse of the original Payne's Standings. The projected extent of the arena indicates that the bulk of the building is contained within the Benbow House site, with the eastern limits extending into Bear Gardens road.



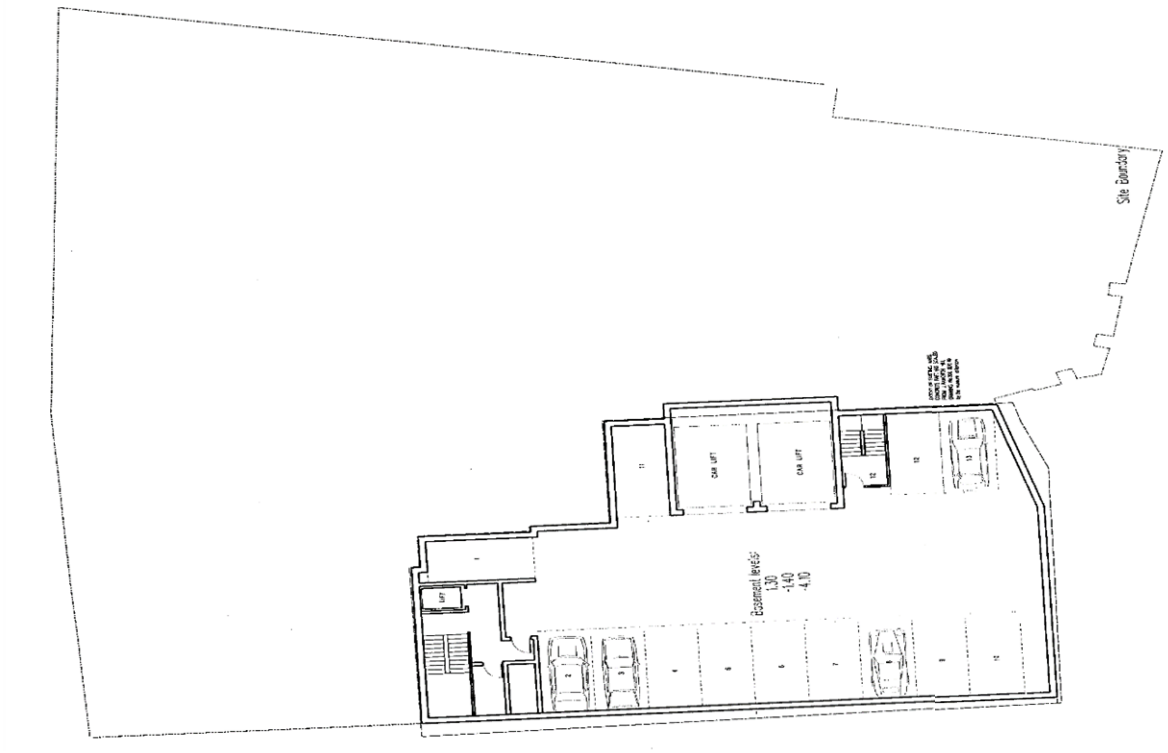
Projected extent of Bear Gardens 3A (reproduced from Mackinder, 2000)

To the north of the remains of Bear Gardens 3A was a substantial delft-ware dump, recovered from a re-used medieval cellar. This may represent waste from the early pothouse on the site; other dumps nearby contained significant glassworking debris related to the first glasshouses on the site. A number of 18th and 19th century mainly industrial buildings were found on the site, mainly to the north.

Past impact and potential survival

A preservation in situ methodology was applied across the Benbow House site in relation to the present development, constructed in 1999/2000. A three storey underground car park is on the western side of the site, in an area that was largely already disturbed and away from the remains of the bear baiting arena. Construction impact was limited to a depth of 3.70mOD across the rest of the site, other than discreet pile cap locations that were situated to avoid significant remains. This has resulted in a full preservation of archaeological deposits of the Bear Garden and any associated deposits. This also, however, means that the discovered remains have not

been fully investigated nor is it certain if the projected building outline is intact and has not been affected by contemporary intrusions.



Benbow House basement level (north is to the left)

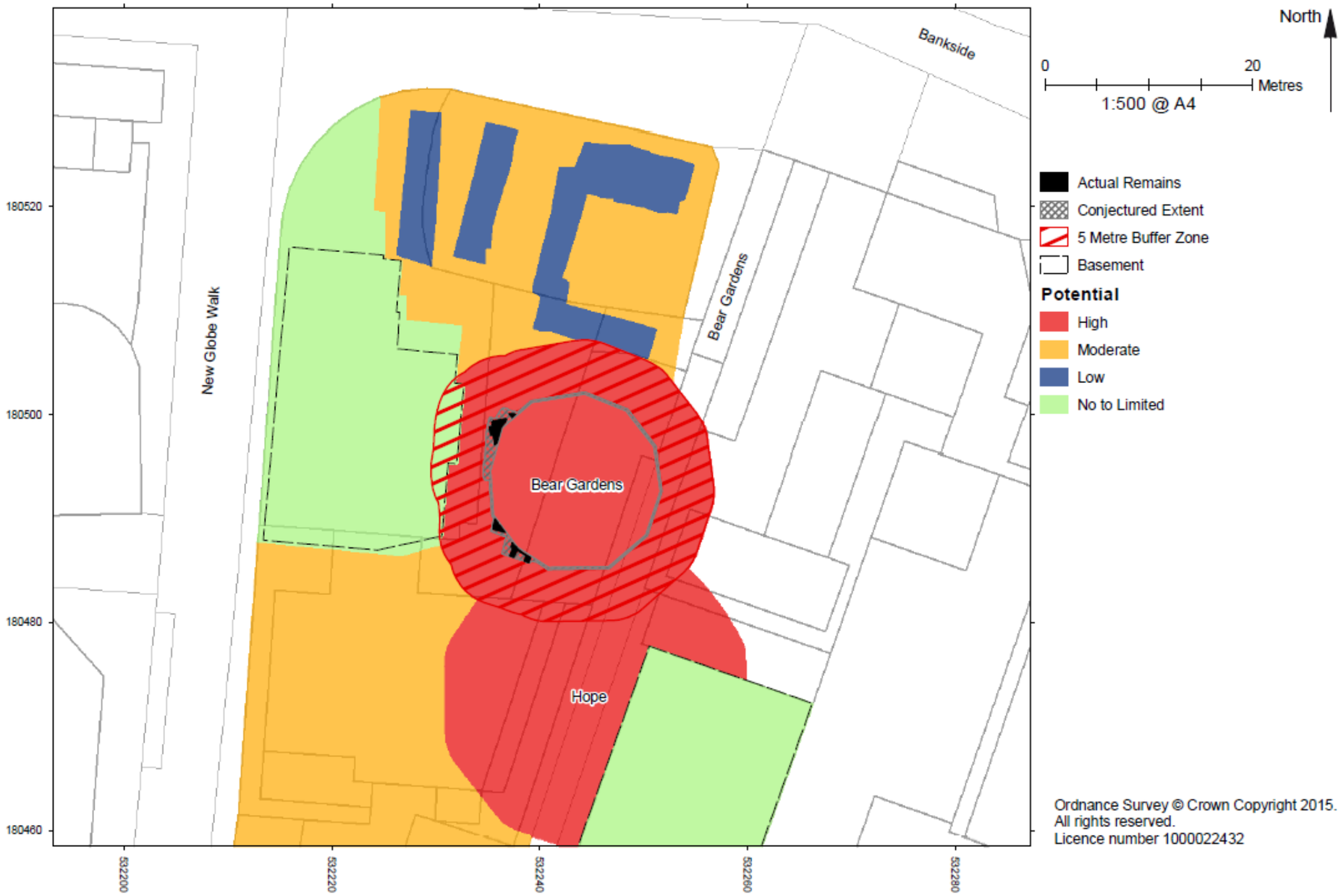
An archaeological watching brief was conducted along Bear Gardens in 2009 by Pre-Construct Archaeology in advance of Thames Water replacement works. In the projected area of the arena, the depth of the service trenches only reached c. 3.06mOD, well above that of the anticipated level of survival of associated remains. However, the base of the trench did encounter mixed dump deposits containing glass waste, which may be associated with the dump deposits sealing earlier evidence. Although the trench was of limited size, there was no indication of wide-scale truncation in Bear Gardens itself.

There are no current planning permissions that have the potential to affect the buried remains. Should the largescale redevelopment of Benbow House occur, the remains would potentially be under threat.

The below illustration shows the likely archaeological potential of the site. The predicted footprint of the arena is considered to have a high potential, as the remains, where seen on the southern side of the site, have not been excavated and are preserved in situ. The remainder of the projected footprint of Bear Gardens 3A has

not been excavated, and there is no indication of systemic modern truncation in this area. The limited excavations have been unable to determine if there was a second row of timber or brick piles outside, or indeed inside, the observed remains, which would make structural sense, particularly as the arena was modelled after the Theatre. The buffer zone of high potential is intended to accommodate this possibility, as well as any other structural remains, such as doors, entrances or surfaces which may be directly associated with the bear baiting arena. It should also be noted that the exact physical relationship between Bear Gardens 3A and the Hope Playhouse is uncertain, and the Hope may abut the arena, or may partially overlie it.

The areas indicated as being of moderate potential lie outside of the projected area of the arena itself, yet contain secondary features that are associated with its operation and use. This includes the remains of several tenement buildings, used as public houses or access into the arena, to the north of the site along the riverside frontage. This area has been subject to archaeological excavation. In the southern area of the Benbow House site and the adjacent 20 – 22 New Globe Walk, pits have been excavated that contain the skeletal remains of bears, horses and dogs, as well as possible kennels. In the Benbow House site, construction impact does not extend below 3.70mOD except in localised areas, although there has been a reasonable amount of ground disturbance across the site associated with previous use. The blue areas – indicating low potential – have been excavated to below the level of anticipated significant archaeological survival, and the green 'no or limited potential' areas mark the location of underground car parking or basements, which will have removed all archaeological deposits.



Significance and importance

The remains of Bear Gardens 3 (Payne's Standing)/3A and the associated deposits are considered to be of national importance and a high significance. They represent a rare survival of a form of entertainment that was extraordinarily popular from the 16th – 18th centuries, and are the earliest known surviving examples of bear baiting pits in the London area. It is extremely unlikely that remains of the first two Bear Garden arenas survive due to later development and truncation. This would make the archaeological remains of Bear Garden 3A the earliest preserved example of this type of monument.

In terms of **evidential value**, there is key evidence for the form, structure and use of a bear baiting arena, which is considered of high significance. This significance is enhanced through evidence for associated yard surfaces, possible dog kennels and deposits revealing the workings of the arenas in terms of the recovered animal bones. In addition, there are surviving and excavated remains from associated tenement houses, or stews, which would have been in operation during, and as part of, the games. These are considered to be of a medium significance, in that they contribute to the understanding of the whole, but are in themselves isolated and not atypical deposits for an urban London site.

The evidential value is increased when the Bear Garden is considered in context with the other surviving remains of the Hope Playhouse and Davies' Bear Pit (see below, sections 2.3 and 2.4), which give a detailed impression of the workings and success of this popular entertainment. The three venues could, in fact, be seen as a continuity of design evolution, activity and purpose over a hundred-year period.

Bear Garden 3A is an important example of a transitional architectural style. It adopts the practical uses of the earlier bear baiting arenas, including its immediate predecessor Payne's Standings, combined with a direct derivation of the new style polygonal playhouse of the Theatre in Shoreditch. It is directly modelled after this new building type, which in itself is an iconic architectural innovation.

The extensive and detailed documentation associated with the land and operations of the games, coupled with the archaeological evidence, are of high **historic value**. There is a direct link between named individuals, historic events, documents and archaeological evidence, which is a rare occurrence. The remains are also of high significance in terms of their **communal value**, by virtue of their rarity and their role in understanding a key component of the pastimes and entertainments of Elizabethan England. The Bear Gardens were considered a 'must-see' tourist destination throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, supported by the Court, and at times commanded greater attendances and more profit that the nearby playhouses and theatres. Today, the site is preserved in local street names, shops and venues, and forms part of the overall experience of modern Bankside.

The remains of Bear Gardens 3A are also considered to be of **national importance**, when applying the Secretary of State's criteria. As with the above evidential value, the remains are characteristic of a specific entertainment and activity first and predominantly seen in the Elizabethan period. Although the remains of the arena as presently excavated are relatively meagre, they are the earliest surviving example of this monument type in London, of which there are only two other examples (the Hope Playhouse and Davies' Bear Pit), which makes them especially rare and also of a high group value. The modern archaeological excavations are well documented and archived, and the finds associated from the arena complement the structural remains.

The survival of Bear Gardens 3A is presently enabled due to the implementation of a preservation in situ strategy. The remains themselves, however, could be at risk should further development be proposed within the predicted footprint. The timber piles are also fragile, and have survived in part due to the waterlogged environment of the London clay. The archaeological interest of the site remains high, as only part of the Bear Gardens has been uncovered and there is a great potential for further understanding of the asset should it be subject to further investigation.

2.3 Davies' Bear Pit

Location

The remains of Davies' Bear Pit (Bear Gardens no. 5) are situated at NGR 532223 180439, in the London Borough of Southwark. They are preserved *in situ* underneath standing buildings at nos. 58 and 60 Park Street, SE1, which are on either side of the southern end of Bear Gardens. The site lies within an Archaeological Priority Area as defined by the London Borough of Southwark.

History, cartographic and documentary sources

Davies' Bear Pit was the last of the bear baiting arenas to be built on Bankside, and in fact was the last of the polygonal timber-framed buildings erected, including the playhouses. Perhaps fittingly, it was the largest of them all, with an external diameter of approximately 30m.

With the demolition of the Hope Playhouse in 1656 during the Civil War, there was no specialised location for bear baiting or associated entertainments in Southwark. The sport, however, was resurrected following the Restoration in 1660. Documentary evidence for the Davies' Bear Pit is first seen in records of a suit brought by John Squibb against James Davies and others in 1675/6. In the suit Davies, who was Master of the Bears under Charles 1, had, since the Restoration, kept the games in other places, but stated that he had been ordered by the Privy Council to return 'to the uccustomed place on bankside in Southwarke, and to reduce the said ground to its former use'.

Davies further stated that he and his father, Thomas Davies, had spent £2,000 in building and fitting the new arena and associated facilities at Bankside, saying that this included, 'a theatre, dwelling house with stable, a barne and other places fitt for Beares, Bulls, Doggs and other conveniences for the game.' This was situated to the south-west of the Hope, fronting onto Park Street. As archaeological evidence has shown, this was likely the first significant construction phase on the site.

There is a wealth of contemporary descriptions of Davies' Bear Pit, which provide evidence for the nature of the games and activities at the venue, as well as a shift in social mores. Samuel Pepys visited the Davies Bear Pit on at least four occasions from 1666 to 1669 (14th August, 1666; 27th May 1667; 9th September 1667; 12th April 1669). The diary entries are instructive for the detail they contain about the facilities and outbuildings as well as the events themselves.

The entries from 1667 both relate that the Bear Pit was so busy that Pepys had to enter through an adjoining inn or ale house and into the pit, while on the other two occasions he sat in a box.

The entry from 27th May 1667 reads as follows:

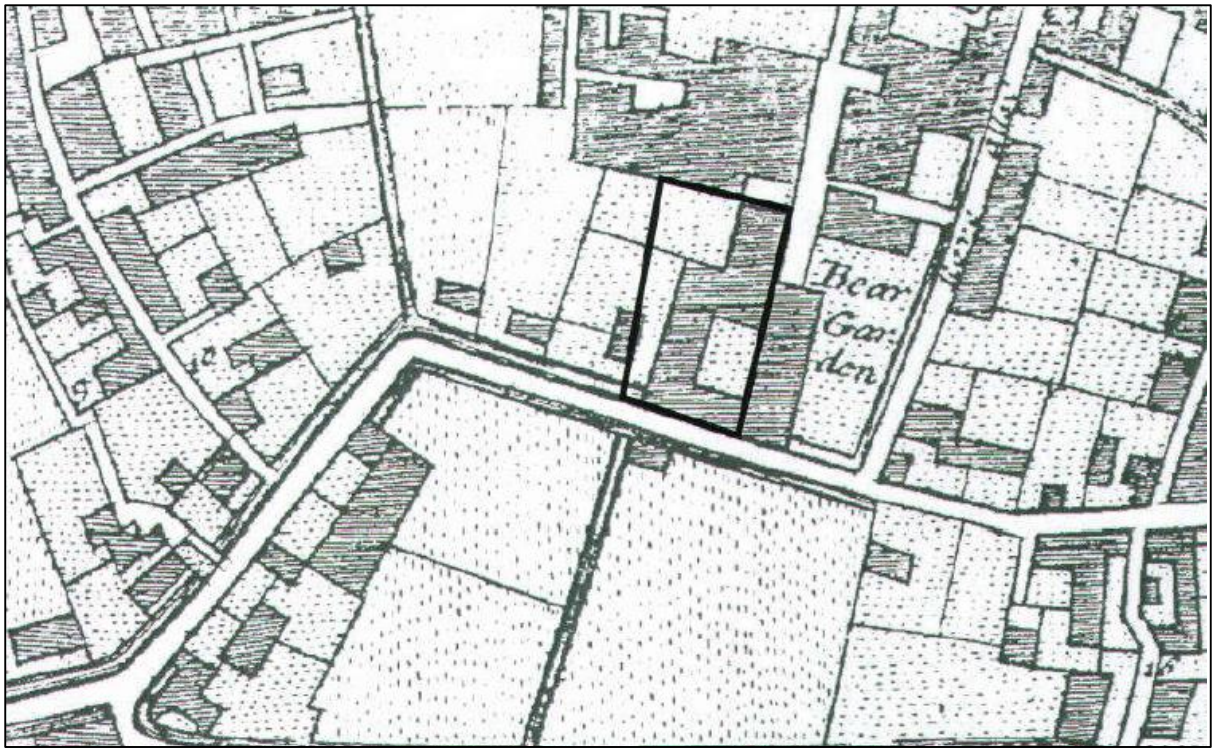
> So home; and there to sing with my wife before dinner, and then to dinner, and the abroad by [water] and stopped at the Bear-garden stairs, there to see a Prize fought; but the house so full, there was not getting in there; so forced to [go] through an ale house into the pit where the bears are baited, and upon a stool did see them fight, which they did very furiously, a butcher and a waterman. The former had the better all along, till be and be the latter dropped his sword out of his hand, and the butcher, whether not seeing his sword dropped or I know not, but did give him a cut over the wrist, so as he was disabled to fight any longer. But Lord, to see how in a minute the whole stage was full of watermen to revenge the foul play, and the butchers to defend their fellow, though most blamed him; and there they fell to it, knocking down and cutting many of each side. It was pleasant to see, but that I stood in the pit and feared that in the tumult I might get some hurt.'

On the 9th September 1667, Pepys again visited to see fighting matches:

> 'To the Bear-Garden, where now the yard was full of people, and those most of them seamen, striving by force to get in, that I was afraid to be seen among them, but got into the ale-house, and so by a back way was out into the bull-house, where I stood a good while all alone among the bulls, and was afeared I was among the bears, too; but by and by the door opened, and I got into the common pit; and there, with my cloak about my face, I stood and saw the prize fought, till one of them, a shoemaker, was cut in both wrists that he could not fight any longer, and then they broke off; his enemy was a butcher. The sport very good, and various humours to be seen among the rabble that is there.'

John Evelyn, the other great 17th century diarist, also attended Davies' Bear Pit, in 1670. His diary entry of 16th June of that year is illustrative of the types of animal baiting and fights that occurred, as well as a more modern attitude: 'I went with some friends to the bear-garden, where was cock-fighting, dog-fighting, bear and bull baiting, it being a famous day for all these butcherly sports, or rather barbarous cruelties. The bulls did exceedingly well, but the Irish wolf-dog exceeded, which was a tall grey-hound, a stately creature indeed, who beat a cruel mastiff. One of the bulls tossed a dog full into a ladys lap, as she sat in one of the boxes at a considerable height from the arena. Two poor dogs were filled, and so all ended with the ape on horseback, and I most heartily weary of the rude and dirty pastime, which I had not seen, I think, in twenty years before.'

Davies' Bear Pit was demolished in 1682. Morgan's map of 1682 shows a large courtyard surrounded by buildings labelled 'bear gardens.' As the archaeological evidence shows the arenas a being a polygonal structure, these must show the newly built replacements. There has been speculation that the open courtyard refers directly to the open pit of the bear baiting arena, although the centre of the Davies Bear Pit is now known to be slightly further south.



Morgan's map of London, 1682, with 60 Park Street marked (reproduced from Saxby, 2011)

As with the rest of the general area, it is known that there was a glasshouse and a pottery in the Bear Garden area by 1671; at which time William Lillington and John Bowles leased the site for their new glasshouse from John Squibb. The glasshouse was renowned for its production of Crown Window glass, which is said to have been invented at Bear Gardens. The glasshouses continued to operate in the immediate area until c. 1726. The site of Davies' Bear Pit is also that of a stoneware pottery, which by 1702 was producing delftware, until it too was converted to a glasshouse in 1705. Maps from the mid-18th century show the entire area as being heavily developed, with tenement buildings lining both the east and west side of Bear Gardens.

The Union Works building at 60 Park Street, now largely a façade, dates from 1867 and is Grade 2 listed (List entry number 1385754). The list description is as follows:

> Workshop and engineering premises. c1867-68. For David and Andrew Derrin. Brick in Flemish bond with header bond to curved corner ranges. EXTERIOR: 2 storeys and 5-window range to Park Street and Emerson Street; 4-window range to Bear Gardens and 2 bays to rear elevation. Brick plinth. The elevation articulated into ranges by 5 round-arched window recesses; windows to ground floor camber-arched; round-arched above. Brick entablature band and dentil cornice over centre forming a pedimented attic. Wall projecting to either side of centre range as giant pilaster strips. Flat-arched entrances set in stucco-faced aediculates consisting of Tuscan pilasters and entablature with massive

dentil cornice. This treatment repeated to Bear Gardens elevation with segmental-arched windows, the rest rebuilt along with the wall. Dentil cornice intact, however. Plinth stops at corner bay. One Diocletian window to rear. The gable facing elevation of red brick, 2 storeys and 4-window range, to the rear is not of special architectural interest. INTERIOR: not inspected. A refined essay in the "engineer's classical" manner.

Archaeological evidence

The remains of Davies' Bear Pit have been archaeologically excavated on three different development sites, some with several interventions. The most relevant are the Museum of London Archaeology investigations at the Union Works, 60 Park Street, which took place in staged works from 2002 – 2008, which uncovered the bulk of the arena remains (Site Code PSE02). The MOLA watching brief at 58 Park Street (Site Code PRU05) revealed the western extent of the bear pit foundation walls. Numerous assemblages of animal bones – horses, dogs and bears – have also been recovered from the vicinity, notably at 20 – 22 New Globe Walk, to the immediate north of 60 Park Street (Museum of London Archaeology, Site Code NGW00), as well as at the aforementioned sites.

There appears to be little of significance on the 58 and 60 Park Street sites pre-dating the construction of Davies' Bear Pit. There was a series of layers, a pit, ditch and timber lined channel to the north of the 60 Park Street site, which contained horse, dog and a single brown bear metacarpal. These likely relate to activities within Bear Gardens 3 (Payne's Standings) or 3A, or the Hope Playhouse.

The archaeological evaluation and excavation on 60 Park Street revealed a substantial survival of the western side of a timber-framed polygonal structure, with a complete inner wall and an outer wall of brick foundation piers. The brick inner foundation wall was exposed, measuring 0.48m wide and 0.38m tall – the top of the wall was recorded at 2.11mOD. The inner wall consists of jointed segments of brickwork, with a line of broken tiles forming a cill on the top-most course, c. 0.22m wide, upon which the superstructure would have rested. The size of the inner wall, the width of the cill and the general construction is consistent with the excavated remains of the Globe Theatre and what is specified in the building contract for the Hope Playhouse. A wall of a similar size, construction and height was observed on the western side of 58 Park Street, and it is thought that this marks the inner wall of the eastern side of the bear baiting arena. Here, a clay tobacco pipe bowl, dated to 1660 – 1680, was recovered from silts adjacent the wall, providing a date consistent with the documentary sources.

The outer wall of Davies's Bear Pit is formed of a series of brick pier bases, c. 3.80m apart. The piers are constructed of unfrogged bricks, with the top of the piers at c. 2.20mOD. Between the outer and inner walls is a cobbled floor surface, providing a walking area in the galleries. The surface of the arena was a compacted black silt with

gravel and pebbles. Overlying this surface was a layer of ash and clinker, containing numerous clay tobacco pipes dating from 1690 – 1710, confirming the demolition date of 1682.

The angled inner brick wall of Davies' Bear Pit, at 60 Park Street (reproduced from Saxby, 2011)

To the north of the bear baiting arena a contemporary east-west aligned brick wall was found, which runs parallel to the projected back wall of the Bear Garden. Although a polygonal building, this gives the bear baiting arena a straight northern back wall that may have been related to an entrance gate there. This has been interpreted as being the remains of the ale-house as described by Pepys.

The overall size of the building as extrapolated from the size and angles of the foundations would have made it the largest of the bear baiting arenas or playhouses. It is estimated that the external diameter would be around 30m, with the internal yard some 21m wide. This is slightly larger than the Swan, Globe and Hope Playhouses. The foundation, timber cills and superstructure width also compares favourably with the Hope and Fortune, and demonstrates a continuity of style despite design changes.

The remains of several 18th and 19th century buildings have been seen on both development sites. These are industrial in nature, and relate to the potteries and glasshouses known to be active in the area at the time. The recovered artefacts include large dumps of glass waste including pieces of glass, crucible fragments, furnace

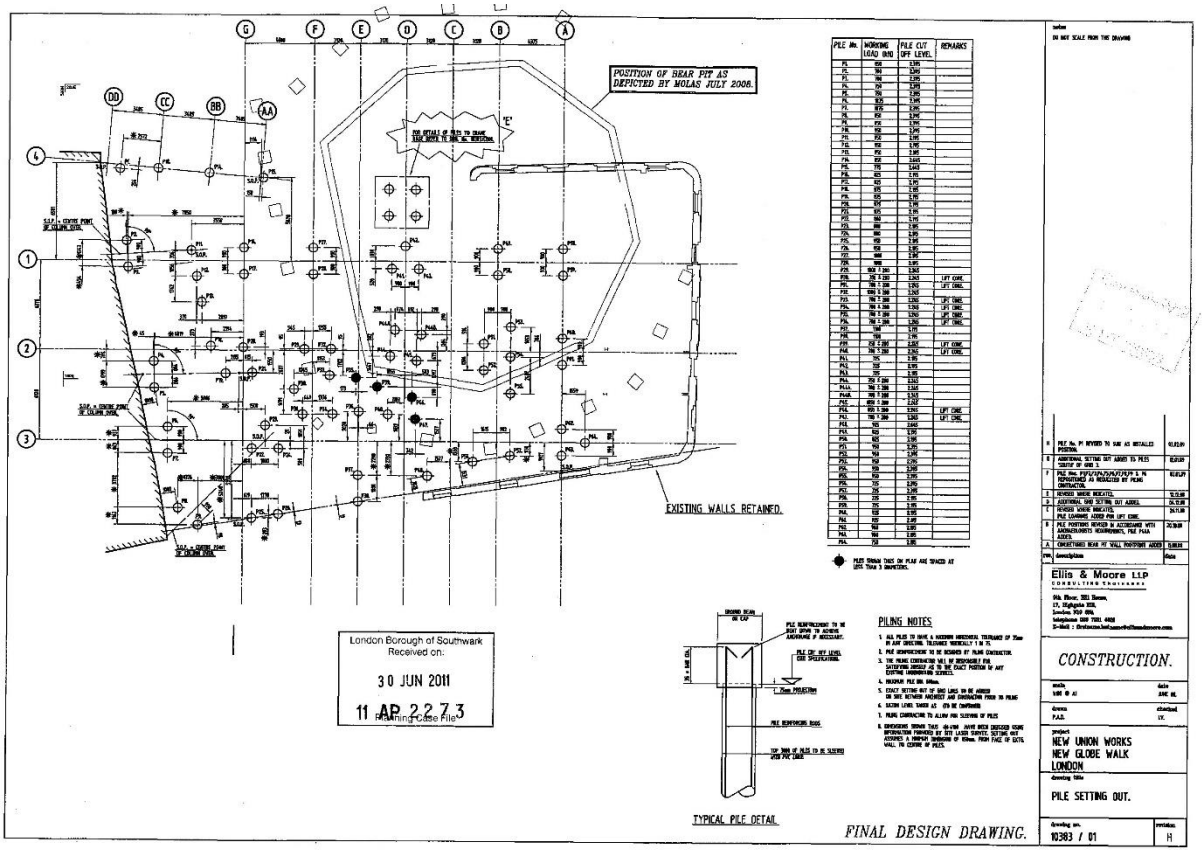
bricks, clinker and slag. The recovered glass waste and delftware kiln manufacturing by-products are interesting in that they are able to contribute to greater understanding of both industries, and can be directly compared with the assemblages recovered from the area.

Past impact and potential survival

There has been steady development on the site of Davies' Bear Pit since it was demolished in 1682. This includes a number of industrial sites and buildings relating to the pottery and glass making industries, as well as 19th century tenements and warehouses. Given that, the level of survival of the arena is surprisingly good. It is estimated that over 50% of the foundations have been investigated and survive. Neither of the modern buildings at 58 or 60 Park Street have basement levels. Recent archaeological watching brief works along Bear Gardens (PCA, BRZ09) observed late 17th century bricks walls with a base depth of 2.55 and 2.68mOD. This would suggest that they relate to post-arena constructions, but also that there is limited modern truncation in the south end of Bear Gardens. Remains associated with the bear baiting arena may survive under the road surface.

Following the excavations at 60 Park Street, a preservation *in situ* strategy was employed, to ensure that the remains of Davies' Bear Pit were protected. This was achieved by moving pile locations to avoid sensitive remains.

There are no planning permissions currently granted for development at the site of Davies' Bear Pit.

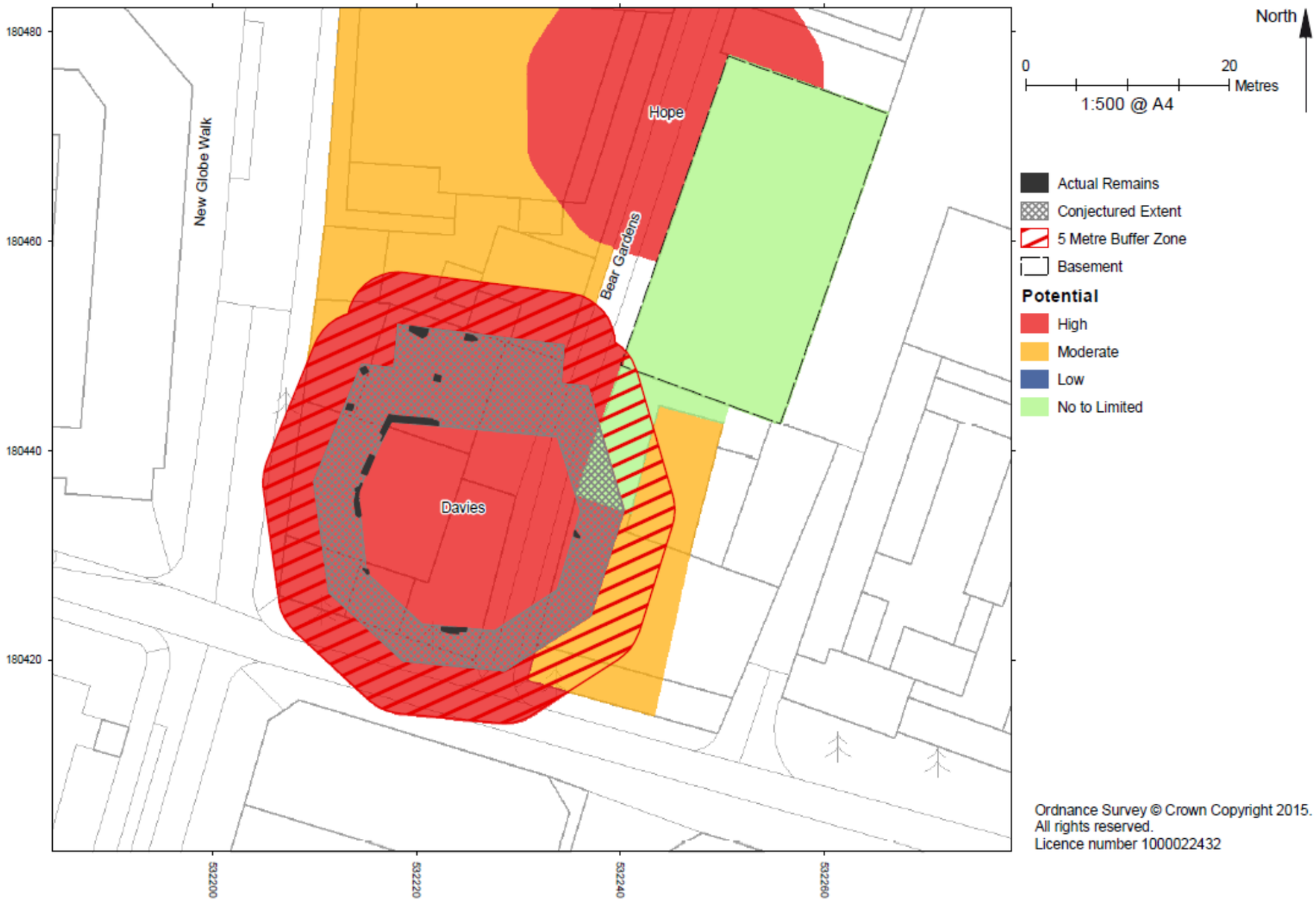


Pile layout at 60 Park Street

The below illustration shows the predicted likely level of archaeological potential of Davies' Bear Pit. The conjectured extent of the arena and a 5m buffer zone is considered of high potential in areas where there has not been antiquarian or modern truncation. Recent archaeological works have been restricted to within development sites, and a large portion of the predicted footprint is yet to be investigated. The area also captures any associated remains, such as the entrance and ale-house described by Pepys, as well as any elements that have not as yet been observed, such as external entrances or stairs or other structural features. The survival of the arena is very good considering the later archaeological sequence and activity on the site.

The area to the immediate west of the arena is considered to be of moderate potential for contemporary archaeological deposits. This has been investigated to the formation levels of the current building at 58 Park Street, but associated deposits may survive in localised areas. To the north, the rear of 60 Park Street and 20 – 22 New Globe Walk is also considered to be of moderate potential, as pits and deposits have been recorded that contain artefactual and ecofactual material associated with bear baiting and related activities. Deep basements at the Empire Warehouse have removed any archaeological deposits.

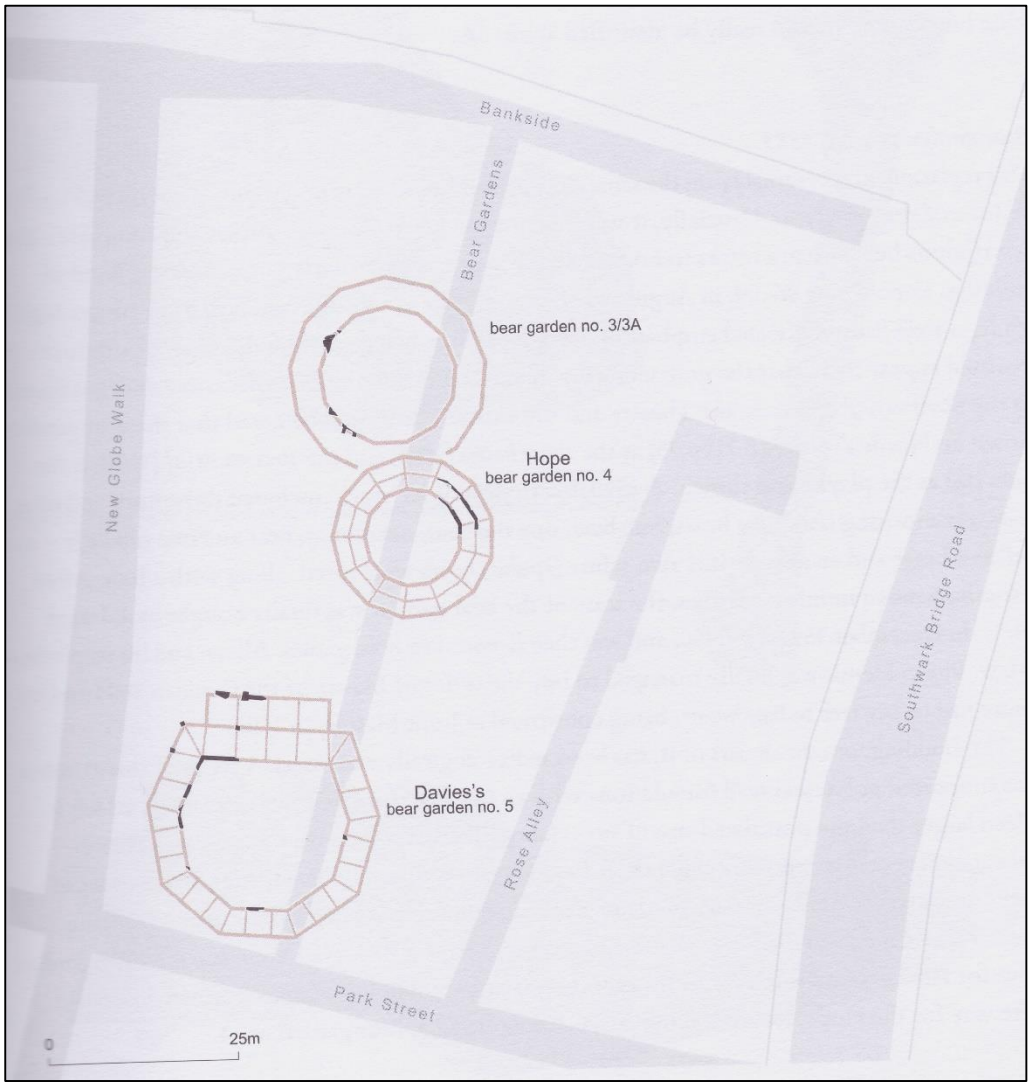
Archaeological potential of Davies' Bear Pit



Significance and importance

The remains of Davies' Bear Pit and the associated deposits are considered to be of high significance and national importance. This is the last – and grandest – of the bear baiting pits in Southwark, and is the best excavated example of one of the arenas. The remains are well preserved and robust, yet are only c. 1m below street level. That it spans into two separate properties and a public road increases its vulnerability.

In terms of **evidential value**, the Davies' Bear Pit is a rare survival of one of London's favourite pastimes, bear baiting. It is the last, largest, and best preserved of the five arenas known to have existed on Bankside. There is a clear development of the form of the arena from that of the Hope, which was erected some 50 years previously, and the other polygonal playhouses. The recovered animal bones on the site also provides evidence as to the workings of the Bear Pit.



The relationship between Davies' Bear Pit, the Hope Playhouse and Bear Garden 3A (reproduced from Bowsher, 2012)

The evidential value is increased when Davies' Bear Pit is considered in context with the other surviving remains of Bear Garden 3A and the Hope Playhouse, which together give a detailed impression of the workings and success of this popular entertainment. The three venues could, in fact, be seen as a continuity of design evolution, activity and purpose over a hundred-year period.

Davie's Bear Garden is highly significant as it concludes the evolution of the bear beating pits and indeed the polygonal playhouses and theatres. It is larger than the largest of the playhouses, the Swan, Globe and Hope. There are clear structural parallels with the earlier theatres, particularly the construction and details of the inner and outer walls, yet this arena introduces a new feature, a straight rear wall that also acts as an entrance and 'concession stand.'

The writings of Pepys and Evelyn are of a highly significant **historic** value, in how they detail the events, activities and spectators at the games. From these writings we are made aware of the various types of entertainments carried out in Davies' Bear Pit and also of how the crowds behaved and they provide a true sense of atmosphere. It is also interesting to note how these later 17th century authors compare to the observations of earlier visitors and writers to Payne's Standing, showing how attitudes towards the games shifted in a relatively short period of time.

The remains are also significant in terms of their **communal value**, by virtue of their rarity and their role in understanding a key component of the pastimes and entertainments of Elizabethan England. The Bear Gardens were considered a 'must-see' tourist destination throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, supported by the Court, and at times commanded greater attendances and more profit that the nearby playhouses and theatres.

The remains of Davies' Bear Pit are also considered to be of **national importance** when applying the Secretary of State's criteria. As with the above evidential value, the remains are characteristic of a specific entertainment and activity first and predominantly seen in the Elizabethan period, and in this instance represent the culmination of several hundred years of development. This is the last, and best understood, of the three surviving bear baiting pits in London. The preservation of the foundations of the arena is very good, and the recent excavations have been able to correlate the archaeological remains with contemporary documentary accounts. The archaeological works on this site and others in the immediate vicinity have shown that archaeological remains associated with the arena and its activities extend throughout Bear Gardens.

The survival of Davies' Bear Pit is surprisingly high given the amount of post-medieval activity in the area. However, there has been little basementing, which has contributed greatly to its preservation. The remains themselves, however, could be at risk should further development be proposed within the predicted footprint. The archaeological interest of the site remains high, as only part of the Bear Pit has been uncovered and

there is a great potential for further understanding of the asset should it be subject to further investigation.

2.4 The Hope Playhouse

Location

The remains of the Hope Playhouse are located at the car park area on the southern boundary of Riverside House, 2A Southwark Bridge Road, SE1 9HA (NGR 532259 180478). The centre of the Hope would have been in the middle of the road Bear Gardens, and would have extended further to the west. Although the original footprint of the theatre would have seen it extend under the Empire Warehouse, to the south, archaeological investigations have shown that there has been extensive truncation relating to the mid-19th century warehouse, and no structural elements remain. The Hope, if it adheres to the projected extent, should have also reached the eastern side of the property at 20 – 22 New Globe Walk. Archaeological works here in 2000 (MOLA, Site Code NGW00) found evidence of kennels or stables associated with the arenas, as well as a significant amount of animal remains (dog and horse) from waterlain deposits, but no remains that can be directly associated with the Hope. It should be noted, however, that the archaeological trenches did not extend to the very eastern side of the property.

The site lies within an Archaeological Priority Area as defined by the London Borough of Southwark.

History, cartographic and documentary sources

In the medieval period, the site of the Hope was, as with the rest of Bankside, first occupied in the medieval period. There is evidence that the land was reclaimed in the 12th century using earth banks and drains. The land was then in the possession of the Bishops of Winchester. With the construction of the stews and tenements from the 13th century onwards the area became synonymous with taverns, inns and brothels. One of these inns, the Barge, is situated to the immediate north of the remains of the Hope Playhouse, between the playhouse and the river.

The history of the Hope is very much intertwined with the stories of the playhouses and the people who built them (see section 3.1 for a general introduction to the playhouses). The close relationship between the playhouses and the bear baiting arenas is also demonstrated here, as the Hope was uniquely built to function as both, with in fact the popularity of the animal sports eventually eclipsing that of the theatrical performances. It has been speculated that the dual use was not just a matter of capitalising on profits, but that animal baiting, which was a favourite pastime of James I, may have been more politically acceptable than another playhouse on Bankside. In either case, the construction of the Hope gave the players an extra venue to attract the theatre going audiences.

The Hope playhouse was built by Philip Henslowe and Jacob Meade; the construction contract with the carpenter Gilbert Katherens, dated 29th August 1613, survives as part of the Henslowe papers at Dulwich College, London. Except for the rebuilding of the Globe following an extensive fire in 1613, the Hope was the last of the polygonal playhouses to be built. It may be that the construction of the Hope was accelerated because of the catastrophic fire at the Globe, which presented a definite business opportunity for Henslowe, but the speed at which contracts were issued and signed suggests that plans for a new playhouse and arena were already afoot.

De Witt sketch of the Swan Theatre, 1596

The building contract between Henslowe/Meade and Katherens is an extraordinarily detailed document, which provides a great deal of evidence for the fabric, form and size of the Hope (reproduced in Appendix 1). A sub-contract for the brickwork also survives. Of particular note is the specification that the Hope should be directly modelled on the Swan Theatre, in terms of size, form and internal layout. The Swan, which was built in 1595 c. 450m to the west, also on Bankside, was the first of the new form of playhouses – larger, grander and with a greater sense of occasion, perhaps intentionally copying Roman architectural prototypes, at least in decoration.

The Swan is also well documented, with a description and a contemporary sketch of the interior of the playhouse by the Dutch visitor Johannes De Witt. In his diary, written in 1596, he describes the Swan as being, 'the largest and the most magnificent…for it accommodates in its seats three thousand persons, and is built of a mass of flint stones (of which there is a prodigious supply in Britain), and is

supported by wooden columns painted in such excellent imitation of marble that it is able to deceive even the most cunning.' Aspects of the Swan visible in De Witt's sketch – such as the boxes, partitions, and staircases, are all specified in the Hope contract. Nothing remains of the Swan, however, as it was situated on what is now a large modern development on Hopton Street, with extensive basements, so the accuracy of the De Witt drawing cannot be confirmed.

Henslowe's original intention was to have the Hope situated partly upon the site of the old Bear Gardens. However, as this location would have spanned two separate properties – one leased from the Crown, one from the Bishop of Winchester – it was moved slightly to the south to be entirely on the king's land. A suggested reconstruction by the Museum of London Archaeology team places the Hope to between 2.0m and 4.05m to the south of the Bear Gardens. The new playhouse was thus built over a ditch on the west side of Bear Garden 3A and the site of the old dog kennels. Timbers, tiles, bricks and slate were all to be recycled and reused in the new building.

The building contract is very specific in intent:

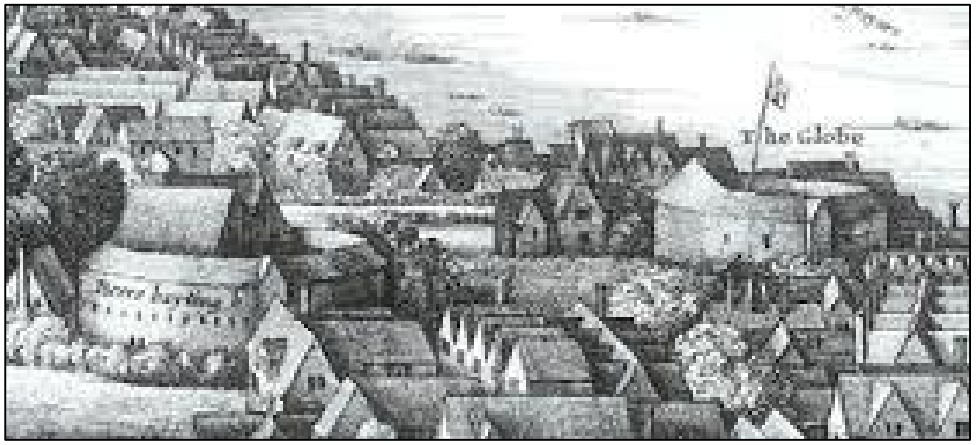
> [to] newly erect, builde, and sett upp one other Game or Plaiehouse fitt and convenient in all thinges, bothe for players to playe in, and for the game of Beares and Bulls to be bayted in the same, and also a fit and convenient Tyre house and a stage to be taken and carried awaie, and to stand upon tressells good, substanciall, and sufficient for the carrying and bearing of suche a stage […] And to builde the same of suche large compasse, fforme, widenes, and height as the Plaie house called the Swan […] and of such largnes and height as the stearcasses of the saide playehouse called the Swan now are or bee And shall also builde the Heavens all over the saide stage, to be borne or carryd without any postes or supporters to be fixed or sett upon the siade stage, and all gutters of leade needful for the carryage of all suche raine water as shall fall uppon the same And shall also make two Boxes in the lowermost storie firr and decent for gentlemen to sitt in And shall make the particions betwn the Rommes as they are at the saide Plaie house called the Swan […]

The facilities at the Hope were also to include a bull house and stables.

The Hope was to have been completed by the end of November 1613, but there is no evidence that it was actually open before October of 1614, at around the same time as the rebuilt Globe reopened. The first play staged at the Hope, by Lady Elizabeth's Company, who were previously based at the Swan, was the premiere of Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* on 31st October 1614. Within the play, Jonson makes several references to the dual-purpose nature of the Hope, such as likening the smell of the playhouse to that of the animals at Smithfield market.

The Hope, and the rebuilt Globe, are shown in the 1647 Hollar map known as the 'Long View of London'. This map erroneously labels the Hope as the Globe (the Hope

is on the right on the map) with the Globe, to the left, labelled 'Beare baiting', but it nonetheless provides details of the Hope's layout. The stage is shown as being on the southern side of the structure, with the main entrance opposite on the riverside. Also visible is the *ingressus,* an internal doorway or entrance to a staircase, providing access to the upper galleries from the open yard areas. Contemporary accounts suggest that theatregoers paid extra admission fees to access the upper levels.



Hollar's Long View of London (1647). The Hope is on the right, mistakenly labelled the Globe; the playhouse on the left, labelled 'Beare-bayting,' is actually the Globe theatre. Details show the main entrance on the north, with the stage on the southern side, and a visible ingressus.

The original intent was to hold animal baiting only on Sundays and Thursdays, with plays in between, combining Henslowe's and Alleyn's business interests as well as maximising ticket sales. However, the animal baiting and other entertainments gradually eclipsed the playing, with increased tension between the actors and playhouse owners, which finally led to the acting company leaving the Hope in 1617, after which very few plays were put on at the Hope. By the 1620s the playhouse had reverted to its old name Bear Garden. There are several contemporary accounts and records relating to the owners and managers of the Hope polluting a common ditch, running from the arena to Maiden Lane (now Park Street), with 'noisome soil.'

The Hope was ordered to be closed by Parliament in 1643, however it continued to operate until 7th May 1653, when Col Thomas Pride MP signed the order that, 'the Bear baiting, bull baiting and playing for prizes by fencers hitherto practiced in Southwark and other places, which have caused great evils an abominations, [are] to be suppressed from this time.'

Nonetheless, the Hope carried on for a few more years. 1655 was a particularly difficult one, with the death of a man, 'killed by a Bull at Bear Garden,' in January of that year, and in September the death of a child who was accidentally locked in with the bears, and killed. John Stow records that the Hope was eventually dismantled in 1656, writing (note that Stow erroneously records the date of construction as 1610, not 1613):

> The Hope of Bankside in Southwerke, commonly called the Beare Garden, a [playhouse for stage-plays on Mondayes, Wednesdayes, Fridayes, and Saterdayes and for Baiting of the Beares on Tuesdayes and Thursdayes., the stage being made to take up and downe when they please. It was built in the year 1610 and now pulled downe to make tenements by Thomas Walker, a petticoat maker in Connon street, on Tuesday, the 5 day of March 1656. Seven of Mr Godfries beares, by the command of Thomas Pride, then his Sheriefe of Surry, were then shot to death, on Saterday, the 9 day of February 1655, by a Company of Souldiers.

From the late 17th century the Bankside area as a whole, including the area of the Hope, was devoted to glassworks and potteries. The earliest references are an indenture of 1671 which mentions an earlier pothouse, occupied by Francis Mercer, as well as a glasshouse. Bowles and Lillington established a new glasshouse in 1671, which was known for the making of Crown window glass. From the mid-18th century onwards, the site of the Hope and vicinity became home to warehouses and tenements.

Archaeological evidence

Museum of London Archaeology carried out a series of archaeological investigations at the site of the Hope Playhouse between 1999 and 2001, in advance of development of what is now known as Riverside House.

As at the adjacent Benbow House site, the earliest archaeological remains near to the Hope relate to the medieval period. This consists of a series of chalk, flint, ragstone and brick fragment walls, and have been tentatively associated with the Barge inn, which was one of the row of buildings fronting the Thames from the 13th – 17th centuries. This is, however, further to the north.

At the very southern limits of the site, in an open car park adjacent the Empire Warehouse, archaeological remains were investigated that have been tentatively identified as being the Hope. Prior to the construction of the playhouse, this area of the site had a series of waterlain silt deposits that had a very high concentration of animal bones, particularly dog and horse although a few bear bones were also present. Some of the bones exhibited signs of butchery and dog gnawing, and it is probable that these deposits directly relate to the activities and stables associated with Bear Gardens 3 and 3A.

The inner wall of the Hope Playhouse (reproduced from Cowan, 1999)

The significant remains were comprised of two parallel brick walls, c. 1.55m apart, which had two angled changes in direction. The walls were of the same build and composed of the same brick and mortar. Although the full depth of the walls was not established, a sondage excavated at one point revealed the base of the inner wall at 1.08mOD. The lower courses of this wall – those which would have been the

subsurface foundations – reached a height of 1.38mOD, above which was a plinth wall surviving to 1.75mOD. This would have been above ground, upon which the timber framed superstructure would have rested. The two walls, outer and inner, were 1.55m apart and angled at between 140° and 145°. This would suggest, if the angles and dimensions were repeated, a polygonal building with ten sides, with an internal diameter of 16m (52ft 6in). The depths of the foundations are consistent with the surviving building contract. A few contexts recovered pottery assemblages of a 16th – 18th century date, which consist largely of table and serving ware. These may be associated with entertainments and activities during the performances and at the Barge alehouse.

There are several inherent difficulties with attributing the remains to the Hope, although the likelihood is very strong that these are the remains of the playhouse. First, there is no direct dating evidence for the walls, as the bricks can only be dated to within the range of 1450 – 1700. However, the remains can be stratigraphically placed within the early – mid 17th century.

Second, the distance between the two walls – 1.55m – is too small to accommodate galleries for the audiences. If the remains are those of the Hope, the present outer wall may in fact be an internal strengthening wall, and that the actual external wall was further to the north, and in the excavation area was removed by later activity. If equidistant from the present walls, or compared with the depth of the galleries from other excavated examples (the Rose, Theatre, Globe and Curtain), the estimated external diameter would range from between 24 – 25.4m. This size is in keeping with the observations from the Swan and the Hope building contract, and would confirm that the second wave of the playhouses were indeed of a larger scale that the first to be built.

Third, the possible theatre remains have been almost entirely obscured by late 17th century alterations. When the Hope was dismantled in 1656, only the two inner walls as described above survived. The surviving foundations were re-used to form the base of an arched or vaulted brick structure, with the addition of a new north-south wall and steps leading down between the brick walls. This structure preserved the original polygonal shape, although the angles were altered. This is consistent with the remains being that of a vaulted brick-lined flue, associated with the glassworks, as has been recorded elsewhere.

The Hope Playhouse with later glasswork vaulted walls (reproduced from Mackinder, 2013)

Elsewhere on the site some 23 buildings and a kiln associated with the glassworks, potteries and later foundry were recorded and preserved.

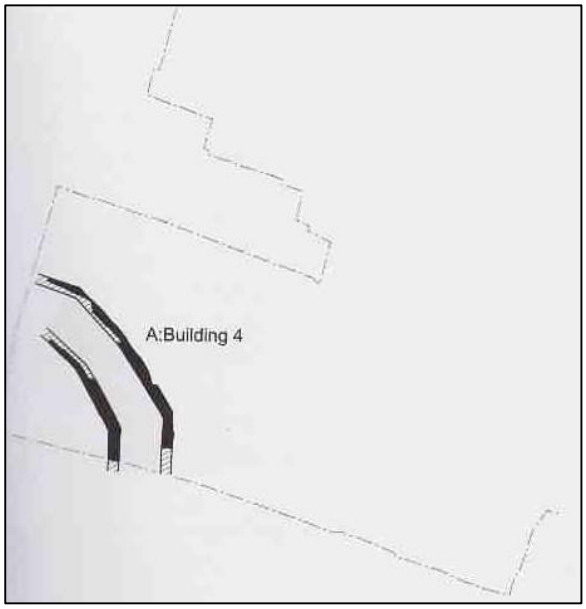
The Hope Playhouse with later glasswork vaulted brick walls (reproduced from Mackinder, 2013)

Past impact and potential survival

The archaeological investigations at the Riverside House site, although extensive, did not remove later remains nor fully excavate or expose the arena deposits. Instead, a preservation *in situ* approach was adopted, which saw the overall excavation of the site limited to 3.10mOD for hard deposits, such as walls, or to a maximum depth of 2.30mOD for soft deposits. This was to allow sufficient depth for a new concrete raft to be constructed. Accordingly, the remains of the Hope within this development car park remain intact.

The excavations, however, only exposed a small area of the Hope's footprint. To the immediate south, at the Empire Warehouse, archaeological works were able to conclusively demonstrate that no structural remains associated with the playhouse survive (MOLA 2008, Site Code EWH08).

An archaeological watching brief was conducted along Bear Gardens in 2009 by Pre-Construct Archaeology in advance of Thames Water replacement works. In the projected area of the arena, the depth of the service trenches only reached c. 3.06mOD, well above that of the anticipated level of survival of associated remains. However, the base of the trench did encounter mixed dump deposits containing glass waste, which may be associated with the dump deposits sealing earlier evidence. Although the trench was of limited size, there was no indication of wide-scale truncation in Bear Gardens itself.



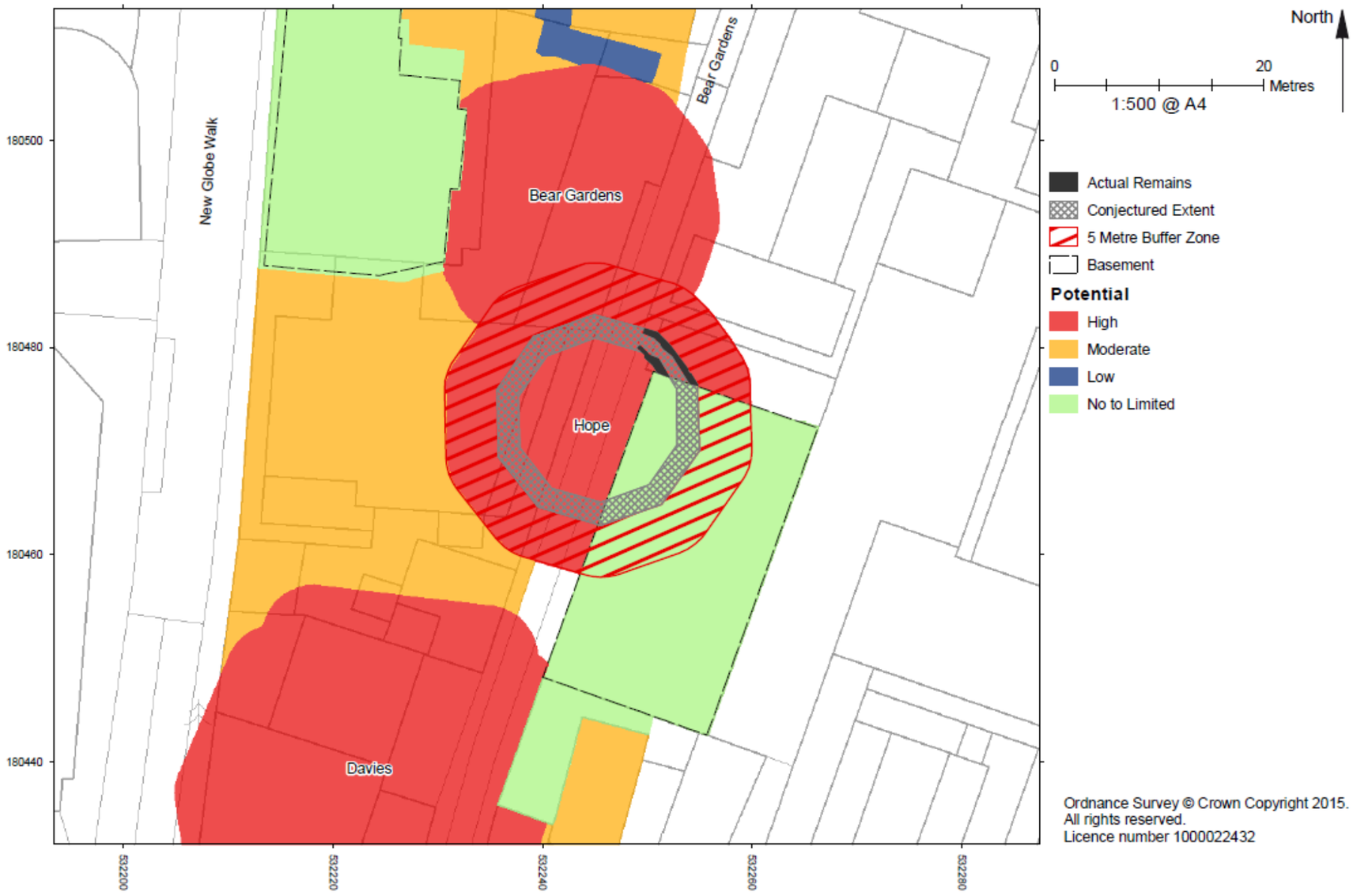
Excavated area of the Hope Playhouse (reproduced from Mackinder, 2013)

Further west, on the western side of Bear Gardens, archaeological works were carried out at 20 – 22 New Globe Walk (MOLA, Site Code NGW00). The investigations were limited to relatively small evaluation trenches and test pits, which did not extend to

the eastern boundary of the property. Evidence of kennels or stables associated with either the Hope or Bear Gardens 3/3A were observed, as well as a significant amount of animal remains (dog and horse) from waterlain deposits, from c. 1.35mOD. Historic mapping shows that there has been continual development of this area, which will have caused localised truncation but there is no evidence of basements in this area.

There are no current planning permissions granted that would affect the proposed footprint of the Hope. However, deep trenching in the road Bear Gardens or at 20 – 22 New Globe Walk could affect associated remains.

The below illustration shows the possible archaeological potential of the remains of the Hope Playhouse. The remains of the Hope, where seen in the Riverside House excavations, are well preserved and robust brick foundations. The survival, no doubt, has been greatly influenced by later reuse of the foundations as the footings for a later flue structure. With the exception of the known truncation due to the basement of the Empire Warehouse, to the south of Riverside House, there is no known modern disturbance and so the potential for archaeological remains of the arena is high. As above, there has been limited archaeological work to the west of the Hope, on the 20 – 22 New Globe Walk site, where remains of pits and deposits associated with either the Hope or the earlier Bear Gardens 3 (Payne's Standings)/3A have been found. This is considered to be of moderate potential.



Significance and importance

The Hope is considered to be of high significance and national importance. Not only is it the last of the great playhouses to be built, but its dual function of a theatre and bear baiting pit is unique. The location of the remains bodes well with the documentary evidence of the theatre being immediately adjacent to the earlier Bear Gardens 3A, and the size and distinct polygonal shape suggest it is indeed the Hope Playhouse. It is probably unlikely that the existing remains will be further investigated. Further elements of the playhouse may be present at depth under the public highway and on the eastern extent of 20 – 22 New Globe Walk, as there is no current evidence for modern truncation in these areas. The remains under the car park at Riverside House are robust, however, mainly due to their re-use as part of a later glassworks, and there may be associated deposits.

In terms of **evidential value,** the remains of the Hope are well preserved, albeit due to later re-use, and represent a pivotal point in the development of both amphitheatres and bear baiting pits. The Hope was purposely designed to be of a dual-function, which makes it unique to both monument types, and is the last of the playhouses to be built. The extensive documentary evidence associated with the building of the Hope, particularly the extant building contracts, also makes it of high **historic value**. There are documents that describe the building contracts for the Fortune Playhouse, also built by Philip Henslowe in 1600, but this was a very different building, being rectangular in form, and did not have a specific dual use for animal games. The Hope, therefore, is the only one of this building type, and which has surviving remains. The association with Henslowe and to a lesser extent his son-in-law Edward Alleyn, is significant due to their roles surrounding the theatrical and entertainment opportunities in the Bankside area, as impresarios capitalising upon the opportunities present at Bankside and elsewhere. The Hope also saw the first staging of Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*, in 1614.

The opportunities for further understanding within the context of the other Elizabethan and Jacobean entertainments in the Bankside area mark it of **communal value**.

In terms of **national importance**, the Hope Playhouse is exceptionally rare in that it is a unique structure – it is the only one of London's, or indeed England's, Elizabethan and Jacobean bear baiting pits or theatres to be purposely designed to host both forms of entertainment. It has a unique position in understanding contemporary social mores and interests, and the wealth of documentary evidence associated with the building's construction and use enhance its importance. The Hope also holds an interesting position of being included in the study of both the bear baiting pits and the playhouses, and contributes to discussions on the evolution and use of both monument types.

The surviving foundations, where they have been observed, are robust. At present, the quadrant of the Hope that has been recorded is preserved *in situ* underneath a

modern car park. Future development work on this site, the public highway or to the west may have a negative impact upon any other surviving elements. Excavation in these areas, however, will contribute greatly to the archaeological interest of the asset.

3 Shoreditch – the Theatre and the Curtain

3.1 Introduction to the playhouses

The great playhouses, or amphitheatres, of the Elizabethan and Jacobean ages are unique monument types to London. These iconic building types are illustrative of the era's 'golden age', and are physical representations of new innovations and thinking in science and literature, entertainment and leisure, trade and global exploration and socio-economic and cultural shifts. The playhouses have a particularly strong historic and communal value, and the association of the buildings with notable figures such as Shakespeare, Marlowe and Jonson elevate them as a focus of national cultural identity.

Plays, playing and players would have all operated in London long before the construction of permanent venues. The owners and players would have been well accustomed to adapting new spaces and auditoria, such as halls, inns, courts and private dwellings, possibly on a daily basis. The drive towards the construction of permanent theatres may well have been instigated by the 1572 'Act of the punishment of vagabonds,' which reads as follows:

> All and everye persone and persones beynge whole and mightye in Body and able to labour, having not Land or Maister, nor using any lawfull Marchaundize Crafe or Mysterye whereby hee or shee might get his or her Lyvinge, and can gyve no reckninge howe he or shee dothe lawfully get his or her Lyvinge; & all Fenceres Bearewardes Common Players in Enterludes & Minstrels, not belonging to any Baron of this Realme or towards any other honourable Personage of greater Degree; all Juglers, Pedlars Tynkers and Petye Chapmen; whiche seid Fencers Bearweardes Common Players in Enterludes Mynstrels Juglers Pedlers Tynkers & Petye Chapmen, shall wander abraode and have not Lycense of two Justices of the Peace at the leaste, whereof one to be of the Quorum, when and in what Shier they shall happen to wander…shalbee taken adjudged and deemed Roges Vacaboundes and Sturdy Beggers.

The punishment for disobeying the Act was to be 'grievously whipped and burned through the gristle of the right ear with a hot iron of the compass of an inch about.' The Act, therefore, required each travelling company of players to be licenced by one or two judicial dignitaries or great nobles. Royal patronage, indeed, was a major aim of the companies. The 1572 Act served the companies well: it authorised the better players to pursue their profession, and in establishing a patronage system there was then the financial backing to construct permanent venues, where profits were more readily accessible. London was clearly the place for such business ventures, as not only were most of the patrons and players based in and around the City, but the biggest audiences were there as well.

The decision to locate the playhouses outside of the City itself has often been ascribed to puritanical motives on the behalf of the City authorities and the Church, as the theatres and arenas were thought to encourage gambling and licentious behaviour. Disease, particularly the spread of the plague, and a fear of rioting was also, no doubt, of consideration. Equally, however, is that outside of the tight physical confines of the square mile, there was an increased availability of land that was more affordable and with a greater development potential. Thus, all of the playhouses were to be found outside of the City, in Cripplegate (the Fortune; no remains of which have been identified to date), Shoreditch (the Theatre and Curtain) and Southwark (the Globe, Rose, Swan and Hope).

The earliest of the outdoor playhouses – the Red Lion in Whitechapel (1567) and at Newington Butts near Elephant and Castle (1576) – were very different in form and construction from the polygonal amphitheatres. Documentary sources show that both of these were developed from or within the confines of existing buildings, were rectangular or square, and were possibly intended to be temporary, not permanent, structures. No archaeological evidence survives from the playhouse at Newington Butts, but recent work in the autumn of 2015 by Museum of London Archaeology at the Red Lion site has uncovered a series of post-holes, which may be associated with the building.

The first of the polygonal playhouses to be built was the Theatre, in 1576. This was a definite break from the architectural tradition of the Red Lion and the theatre at Newington Butts. It is tempting to associate the new form of the playhouses with the bear baiting arenas, as both were roughly circular in form. However, they likely derive from different influences and are quite different in construction. The early bear baiting pits were simple and temporary scaffolding arrangements. The circular shape was a result of the nature of the entertainments themselves – the animal was tied to a post, with the circumference of the arena created by the length of the rope or chain. The last of the bear baiting arenas, the Hope and Davies' Bear Pit, are inspired by the playhouses, not the other way around.

The polygonal playhouses, on the other hand, took their inspiration from classical Roman theatre – indeed the name 'the Theatre' refers directly back, with some pretention, to classical antecedents. These buildings were permanent, timber-framed structures, with three tiers of galleries and an open yard into which extended a raised stage. Social division was inherent in the layout and the creation of 'boxes' for the wealthy and nobility. A polygonal, or circular, structure also got rid of the corners inherent in rectangular or square buildings that were a waste of space that could have generated further income. It is perhaps more fitting to envisage the playhouses as 'auditoria' or 'amphitheatres' rather than theatres.

The excavated examples of the playhouses – the Rose, Globe and Theatre – share certain characteristics. They were built of wood on brick foundations, with thatch or tile roofing material. The inner walls consist of a solid masonry construction, intended

to take the bulk of the building's load, with the outer walls set upon masonry pads sited intermittently. The main entrances are not consistently aligned with compass bearings, but are situated to be as close as possible to main roads, with the stage directly opposite. Once within the playhouses, a sloping yard faced the stage. From the yard access could be gained to the galleries – for a fee – through opposing internal entrances, or *ingressi*. Little evidence, as yet, has been produced of the backstage areas.

We have not lost the Elizabethan playhouses. Their direct influence is still to be found not only throughout London, but across the nation and indeed internationally. The principle of the Elizabethan 'thrust stage' with a central, upstage backstage area and a surrounding audience on three or more sides can be found in a number of modern theatres across the United Kingdom and elsewhere. National examples include the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield (1971), the Swan, Stratford (1986), the Quarry Theatre, West Yorkshire (1990) and the Stirling Prize for Architecture award-winning Everyman Theatre, Liverpool (2011). The concept of theatre in the round is further developed in theatres such as the 1986 Royal Exchange, Manchester. Prominent on the Southbank is the replica Shakespeare's Globe, an open-air playhouse that opened in 1997 and is closely modelled on the archaeological remains excavated at both the Rose and the Globe playhouses. Also part of the Shakespeare's Globe complex is the newly opened Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, which recreates a candle-lit Jacobean indoor theatre.

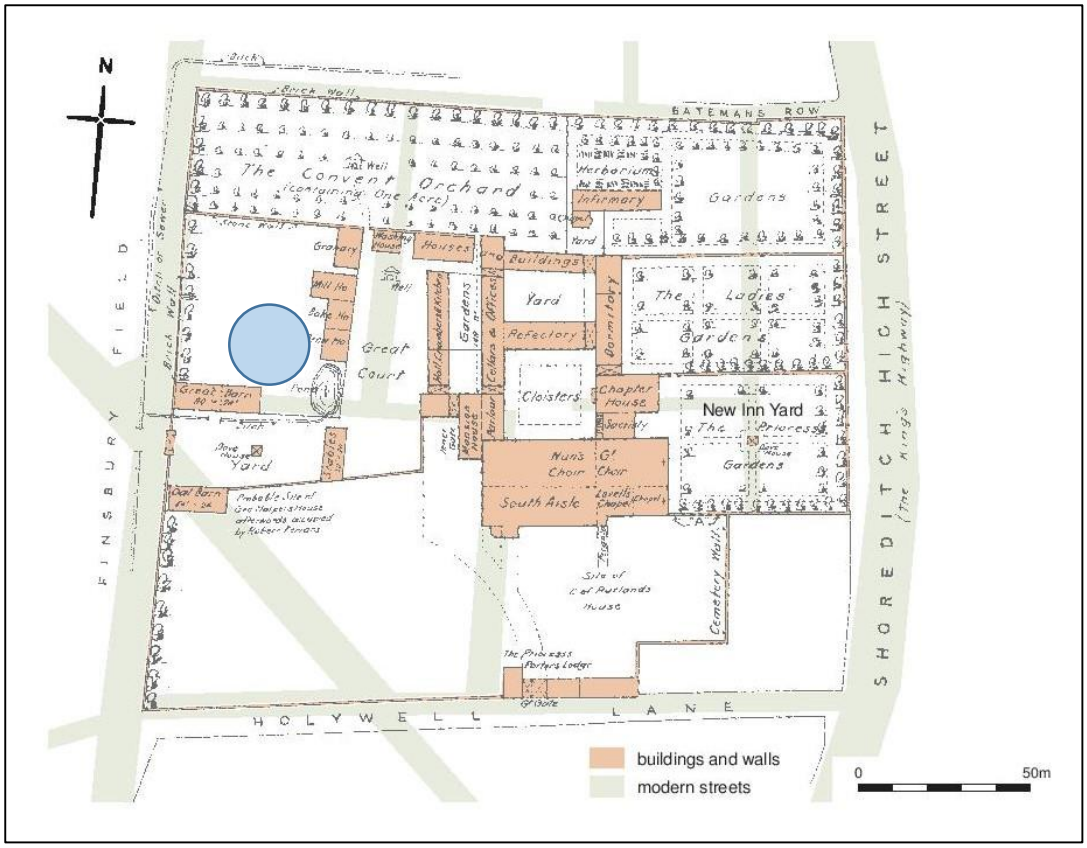
3.2 The Theatre Playhouse

Location

The Theatre is situated at approximately NGR 533310 182389. It is contained within a modern mixed-use block bounded by New Inn Broadway to the east, New Inn Yard to the south and Curtain Road to the west. There are a number of properties on the site, including a 19th/20th century warehouse and 18th century shops and houses facing New Inn Yard. The site lies within an Archaeological Priority Area as defined by the London Borough of Hackney.

History, cartographic and documentary sources

The site of the Theatre has long been identified as being within the outer, northwest corner of the Holywell Priory precinct. The Priory of St John the Baptist dominated medieval Shoreditch from its establishment in c. 1127. The main buildings of the priory lay between Shoreditch High Street on the east and the fields of Finsbury to the west with the southern gate in Holywell Lane. South of the gate lay the prioress's pasture, known as the Curtain. The Great Court – the outer area of the priory – was where the more secular and ancillary buildings were situated: the barns, granaries, a mill house, bake and brew houses.



Reconstruction plan of Holywell Priory, showing approximate location of the Theatre (adapted from Knight, 2013)

Of particular note is the location of the Great Barn, which was situated at the western side of the Great Court, at what is now the junction of Curtain Road and New Inn Yard. Later lease and court documents refer to the Theatre as shoring up or propping the northern wall of this already dilapidated building, providing a possible georeference for the playhouse. For example, a question asked of a witness regarding a 1600 court case between Giles Allen and James Burbage:

> Was there not a decayed longe barne parcel of the said premises demised to the said James Burbage sometymes in the tenure of one Richardes, and Stoughton, and was not the saide barne at the tyme of the leas made to the said James Burbage runyous and decayed, so as to the same was fayne to be shored upp unto the playhouse called the Theater, when it was builte, and hath not the said James Burbadg and the nowe Complainant from tyme to tyme repaired the same Declare yo knowledge herein.

The Great Barn was situated on or immediately adjacent to the priory wall and was likely of a similar 15th century date. In 1600 the description of the barn was as, 'one great tiled Timber barne of foure scoare foote of assise in length and foure and twentie foote of assise in breadth or verie near thereabouts veries substantiallye builte.' This gives a reasonably accurate location of the barn as to the immediate north of what is now New Inn Yard. The dimensions allow for the positioning of the Theatre to the north or northeast corner of the barn, in an open yard area. It is thought that the barn

itself survived the dismantling of the Theatre in 1598, having been converted into tenements, and continued in use until the 18th century.

Following the Dissolution, in 1539, the priory precinct was divided into three main portions. One section passed to the nuns, one to the occupation of the Earls of Rutland, and the third parcel to Henry Webb. Webb in turn sold the property, which was eventually mortgaged to Christopher Allen and his son Giles. In 1576 Giles Allen leased part of his property to James Burbage, who at that time already had the clear intent of constructing a new playhouse on the site. The terms of the lease between Allen and Burbage are detailed and survive in various documents. The description of the land leased to Burbage includes a variety of buildings in different uses and occupancies, some of which were buildings associated with the priory outbuildings. This included the millhouse, a well, buildings occupied by shoemakers, weavers, gardens, the Great Barn, a pond and stables. The picture presented in the lease documents is of a rectangular plot of land with buildings fronting east and south, with an area of open land in the yard area behind the buildings and barn. To the west, the land was bounded by a brick wall, which presumably refers to the original priory precinct wall, now the eastern side of Curtain Road.

Burbage's lease was for 21 years from 13th April 1576. In the terms of the lease, he was to pay an annual rent of £14 and an additional £200 repairing the existing buildings on the site. This was to include the maintenance of the western brick wall and also the shoring up of the Great Barn.

The costs of constructing the Theatre were substantial, and to meet these Burbage entered into a business arrangement with his brother-in-law, John Brayne, who already had interests in the Red Lion playhouse. The arrangements between the two were subject to long running legal disputes, arguments and family feuds that are in part documented in numerous court records. Financial problems dogged the property for many years, so much so that plays were put on before the building was complete, so that profits could be rolled into the final stages of construction, and the playhouse was mortgaged more than once.

Despite financial concerns, the Theatre was a popular venue from its opening on 1st August 1577. There are no contemporary descriptions of the playhouse, but it is known from references in various legal sources that it consisted of a timber-framed structure with a tiled roof, with some ironwork, and that lead, brick, lime and sand was used in the construction. There were three galleries, at least one of which was divided into upper rooms where the audience could sit or stand. There was a theatre yard in the centre, and an, 'attyring house or place where the players make them readye,' which at the Globe contained dressing area, prop rooms, the musician's gallery and internal passageways.

The relationship between the Theatre and the nearby Curtain was a close one, due to their physical proximity and opening a year apart. The relationship was at one point formalised when, in 1585, a legal agreement was entered into between Burbage and

Brayne and the owner of the Curtain, Henry Lanman, in which the profits of the two playhouses were divided between the two sets of owners for a seven year period.

There were a number of playing companies associated with the Theatre. The first to have residence was Leicester's Men, of which Burbage was a member, who were established in 1572. Other incumbents included the Queen's Men, in the 1580s and the Admiral's Men in the early 1590s. It is likely that the first performance of Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* was at the Theatre. By 1594, however, the Lord Chamberlain's Company were established at the playhouse, likely headed by Burbage's son Richard Burbage, who was a leading actor of the times. Also in the company was William Shakespeare; *Hamlet* was very probably first performed here, in 1596, with Richard Burbage as the lead.

With the lease on the property due to expire in 1597, negotiations were held between Allen and James Burbage's sons, Cuthbert and Richard, as to the continuation of the agreement. Disputes were held regarding monies owed, and in late December 1598 the Burbages dismantled the Theatre. This was in accordance with the terms of the original 1576 lease, which allowed Burbage to, 'take downe and carie awaye part of the saide new building.' The brothers, along with the carpenter Peter Street, who later was employed to erect the Fortune and Hope playhouses, moved reusable parts of the Theatre south of the Thames, to Bankside. The raw materials were re-used to part construct their new theatrical venture, the Globe – they did 'take and carrye awaye from thence all the wood and timber ther of unto the Bankside in the parishe of St Marye Overyes and there erected a new playe howse wth the said Timber and wood.'

Very soon after the Theatre was dismantled, the site was occupied by a series of buildings fronting New Inn Broadway and New Inn Yard. The general Shoreditch area was part of the City expansion in the 17th and 18th centuries, with terraced houses and later, in the 19th century, light industrial use coming to the fore. This mixed character continues to the present day.

Archaeological evidence

The area of the Theatre has been subject to a number of archaeological investigations. The most significant have been the series of works at 4 – 6 New Inn Broadway (MOLA, Site Code NIN08), 86 – 90 Curtain Road (MOLA, Site Code CNU02) and 7 – 15 New Inn Yard (MOLA, Site Code THE14).

Natural brickearth levels are generally encountered at c. 12.50 – 13.00mOD, with the present ground surface in the Theatre area at between around 14.20 – 15.00mOD. On average, archaeological remains are reached immediately below surface level.

There are existing remains relating to Holywell prior on the area of the Theatre. These include a brew house and bake house fronting onto New Inn Broadway, numerous ovens, and floor surfaces. Of note was a floor made of reused Westminster tiles that defined the entrance to an unknown building in the priory Outer Court, sealed beneath the Theatre yard. It had been thought that the Great Barn had been identified during

works in 2002 at the 86 – 90 Curtain Road site (CNU02), when a medieval wall was found, underneath the existing basement and surviving to a depth of c. 12.43mOD. The attribution of this building is now uncertain, following more recent work that places the Theatre slightly further to the east. What is important to note, however, is that remains from the medieval period which may have a direct association with the Theatre can survive under the present basements in places, although they will have been truncated.

It is clear that some of the medieval buildings in the area continued in use following the Dissolution. On the eastern side of the site at 4 – 6 New Inn Broadway were several buildings, including a two story tenement as mentioned in the Burbage lease, with the priory brew house continuing in use.

The remains of the north-east quadrant of the Theatre itself and associated features and structures have been identified during archaeological works at the 4 – 6 New Inn Broadway site, excavated by Museum of London Archaeology in several stages from 2008 – 2011. The outer wall of the Theatre is represented by two pier bases – one of brick and one of ragstone – that mark the position of the wall and which would have supported the timber superstructure. The brick pad was truncated to a depth of c. 13.40mOD.

Approximately 3.8m to the south of the outer piers are the north side of the Theatre's inner foundation wall. This consists of a brick foundation wall and a truncated square foundation pad that would have supported one of the structure's main upright timbers, marking the division of one of the internal bays. Several other fragments of the substructure were recorded on the same alignment, some 5m long in total, which together allows for a curved reconstruction of the inner wall. A clay deposit with a distinct angled edge is at the western end of the foundation wall, which likely defines the north-eastern corner of the stage.

Adjacent to the square foundation pad to the east is a short section of brick floor, thought to mark the northern *ingressus* or entrance to the galleries from the yard. The bricks themselves show little sign of wear, which has led to the interpretation that they formed the base for a short flight of wooden steps. Assuming that steps were at a 45^{o} angle the size of the brick flooring allows for 4 equal steps of 8", and places the floor of the wooden galleries within the Theatre structure at 2"9' (84cm) above that of the yard.

Inner foundations of the Theatre (reproduced from Knight, 2013)

The playhouse yard itself is a gravel surface sloping towards the south, which abuts the inner wall. A drip gully, showing the overhang of the Theatre roof to be 9", is evident and has parallels with the excavated example at the Rose in Southwark.

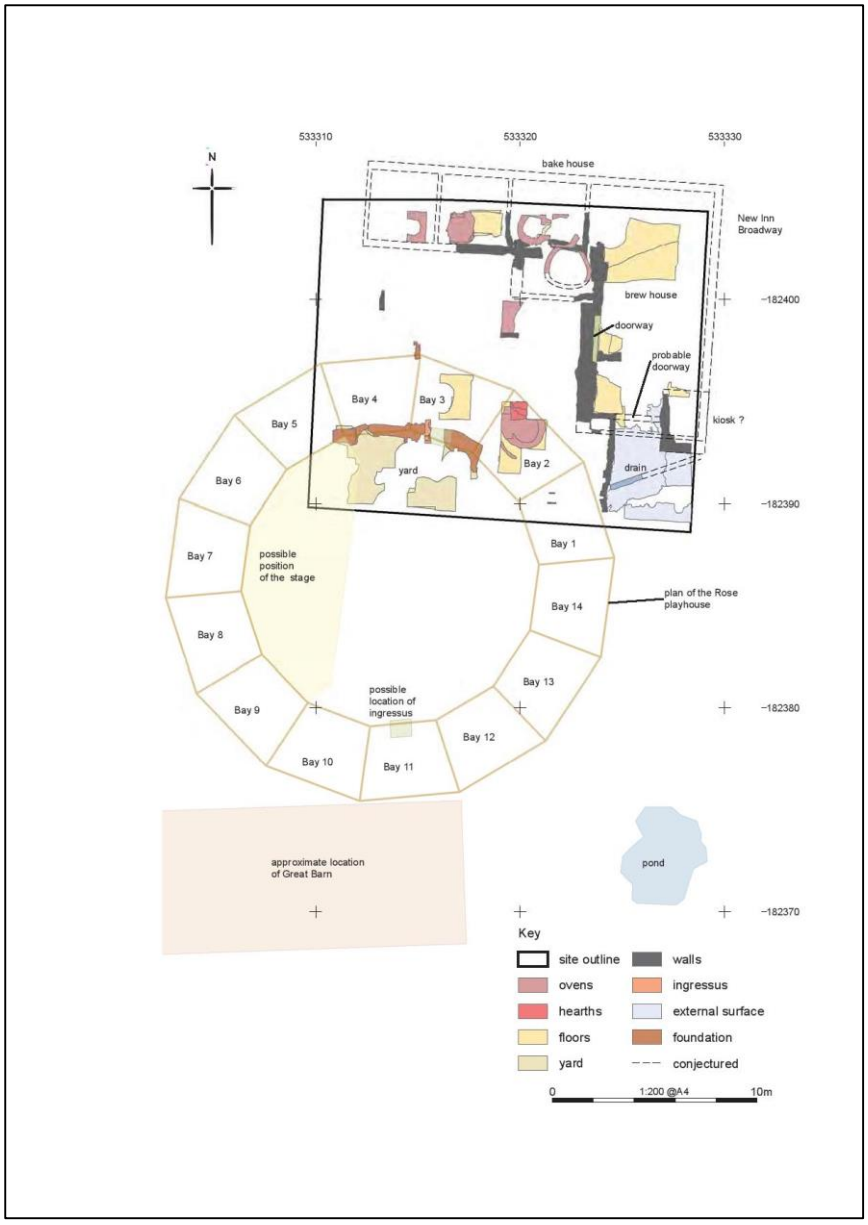
In addition to the remains of the actual playhouse structure, numerous other features directly associated with the Theatre have been recorded. On the eastern side of the 4 – 6 New Inn Broadway site a well preserved cobbled surface was recorded at 13.20mOD. This external surface, which contained ragstone, flint, sandstone and half a mill stone, was likely composed of material reused from the medieval precinct from within the footprint of the playhouse. A drain was set on an alignment perpendicular to the conjectured outer wall of the Theatre, running towards New Inn Broadway, and is thought to have taken water from a down-pipe connected to guttering on the roof out to the street, preventing rainwater damage to the outer wall.

To the north of the cobbled surface the priory brew house building was still in use and adapted to function as part of the Theatre operations. Modifications included the reconfiguration of the building, with new internal walls, doors and the insertion of a 'kiosk' structure. Artefacts from within the pebbled floor surface of the building or this area included a thimble, a scabbard fitting and a roll of copper wire, lace chapes, pins and a costume bell, all of which would have been used in dress or costume making,

and which suggests that the former brew house was a backstage costume store or workshop.

The overall interpretation of the site allows for the playhouse to be reconstructed as a 14 sided polygon with an external diameter of 22m. The remains compare very well with the Rose Playhouse, which has been more fully excavated, and which is based upon the Theatre design. Theatre goers would have entered the playhouse venue from the east, the present New Inn Broadway, into a cobbled yard area. They could then go straight into the playhouse – the stage would have been facing the main entrance – and remain in the yard or use the *ingressus* to access the galleries and upper floors. Alternatively, the theatregoers could have turned to their right into the former brew house and kiosk area. Pottery from the internal yard surface included a fragment of a black-glazed red ware mug, a type often associated with beer, which may have been available from the kiosk area. Further behind, a door led from the old brew house into the yard to the north of the Theatre, but this may have been a private area reserved for actors and other staff. The archaeological findings support the documentary records which state that the Theatre was demolished in 1598, and also that the superstructure was systematically removed.

In the excavation area at 4 -6 New Inn Broadway, it was seen that 17th century buildings were quickly erected on the site, some of which were constructed from reused building material, probably remnants of the Theatre. Of note is the possible location of an apothecary's workplace, identified through environmental and artefactual material. The evolution of this part of Shoreditch as residential, and then commercial, throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, was seen in the archaeological record.



Post-excavation plan of the Theatre remains and conjectured footprint (reproduced from Knight, 2013)

Past impact and potential survival

The remains of the Theatre, as seen in the archaeological works at 4 – 6 New Inn Broadway, are situated at a depth of between c. 13.00 – 13.50mOD. The natural geological deposits are at c. 12.50 – 13.00mOD and the present street level from between c. 14.20 – 15.00mOD.

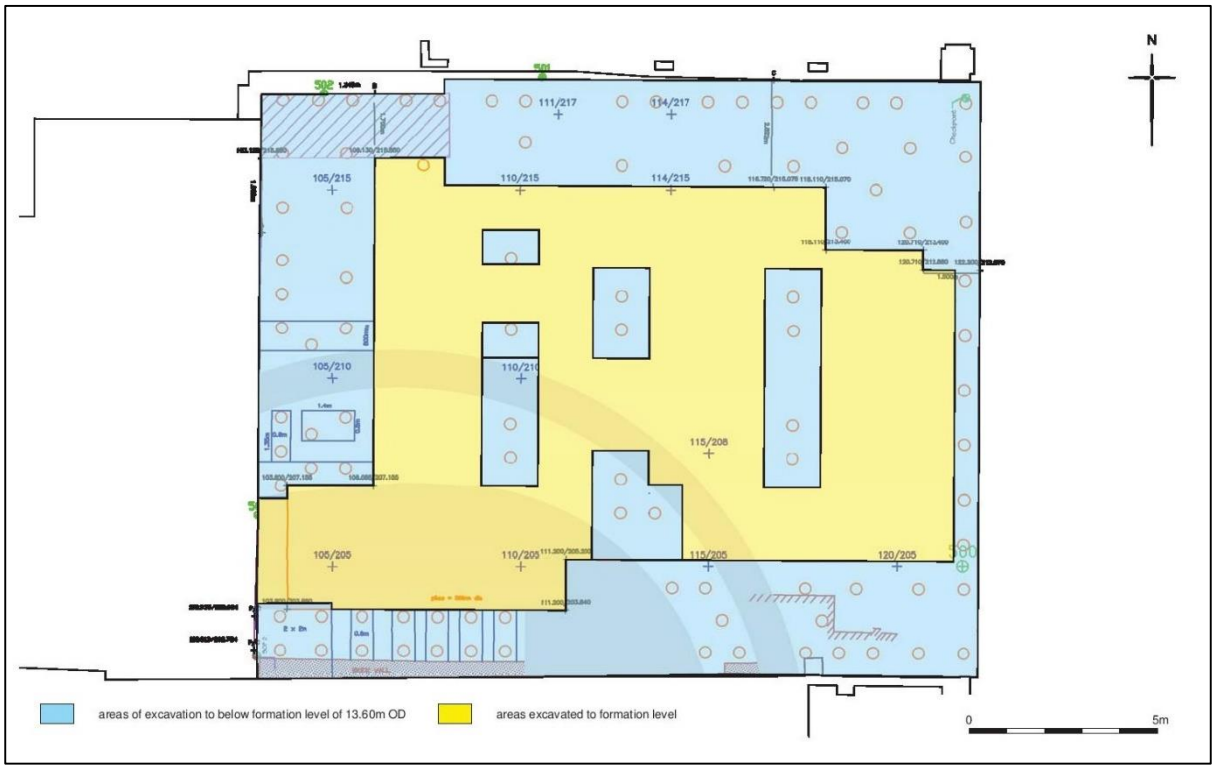
Archaeological field and desk based assessment works at the New Inn Broadway site, as well as at 86 – 90 Curtain Road/1 -5 New Inn Yard and 7 – 15 New Inn Yard, have shown that there are localised basements in the vicinity of the Theatre. Where basements do not exist – such as in the courtyard area at the rear of 7 – 15 New Inn Yard – recent evaluation trenches have shown that the archaeological sequence is

intact (Site Code THE14). There is a high potential for elements of the Theatre to survive in these areas, unless historic truncation has occurred.

Where there are basements present, at the front of 7 – 15 New Inn Yard and 86 – 90 Curtain Road/1 – 5 New Inn Yard, there is a low potential for archaeological survival. However, medieval remains associated with the Holywell Priory do survive underneath the basement at 86 – 90 Curtain Road/1 – 5 New Inn Yard, although severely truncated, at a height of c. 12.60mOD.

The excavation work at 4 – 6 New Inn Broadway was carried out in advance of the determination of a planning application (2009/1683), for the erection of a 4-story building for use as a theatre. The development proposals included the retention and display of the archaeological remains within the development area, as well as display of some of the more significant and interesting artefacts recovered from the excavations.

The foundations of the new building were carefully designed to have a minimal impact on significant remains. The bulk of the site area was reduced to a level of 13.60mOD (above that of the Theatre remains; the yellow area in the below illustration) and pile locations were targeted to less significant areas of the site – in areas already disturbed, or around the north and west perimeter. The area of the ancillary theatre structures – the brew house – has had recent piling associated with this development work. The location of the piles, however, were excavated in advance through the entire archaeological sequence, thus implementing a preservation *in situ* strategy across the site. This was supplemented by planning conditions attached to the consent.



Excavation plan of the Theatre (reproduced from Knight, 2013)

More recently, a new planning application has been granted for the site at 4 – 6 New Inn Broadway and 27 New Inn Yard (LB Hackney planning reference 2012/2768). This new development has the same lower floor and foundation layout as the previously consented scheme, but is 6 stories high instead of the previously consented 4 stories. Planning consent was granted on 3rd August 2015, and includes 2 planning conditions relating to archaeology. These read:

> Condition 15: No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only take place in accordance with the detailed scheme pursuant to this condition. The archaeological works shall be carried out by a suitably qualified investigating body acceptable to the Local Planning Authority.
>
> REASON: Significant archaeological remains may survive on the site. The planning authority wishes to secure the provision of archaeological investigation and the subsequent recording of the remains prior to development, in accordance with the guidance and model condition set out in PPG16.
>
> Condition 16: No foundation construction work will commence in the area of the theatre until a detailed design and method statement for the foundation design and other construction has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
>
> REASON: Where the Local Planning Authority wishes to secure, as a reserved matter, the agreement of detailed foundation and groundwork design, including a method statement that will minimise damage to the archaeological resource.

There are no other current and relevant planning permissions for the area of the Theatre, according to Hackney Council's planning explorer website. Future development within the footprint of the Theatre or adjacent areas could have a negative impact on surviving remains.

The below illustration shows the likely level of archaeological potential in relation to the Theatre. The footprint of the Theatre itself, including the interior yard area, and pockets of non-truncated areas to the immediate west, south and east are considered of high archaeological potential. The investigated areas of the Theatre footprint are preserved *in situ* below a depth of 13.60mOD where possible. The area north of the Theatre remains is considered of having a moderate archaeological potential. Although this area contains the re-used priory buildings, which are associated with the Theatre, they have been excavated to below the foundation level of the presently permitted development scheme (below 13.60mOD) and there has been recent piling in this area of the site. The areas marked as having low potential are within current basements, and only very deep cut features or structures may survive. However, as there have

been only limited archaeological investigations in this area, a suggested buffer zone of high potential will accommodate any unexpected remains.

Archaeological potential of the Theatre Playhouse

Significance and importance

The archaeological remains of the Theatre – those excavated and those anticipated – are considered to be of national if not international importance and of a very high significance. The Theatre was the proto-type of the polygonal amphitheatre that became iconic as the houses for Elizabethan and Jacobean public performance. It is the first of the playhouses to have been built in a form that would be immediate recognisable today, and hosted leading players of the time and plays written by Shakespeare and others in their home venue. The Theatre had a great influence on the structure and design of the later playhouses, and marks the beginning of a standardised design of buildings of this type.

In terms of **evidential value** the remains of the Theatre itself are of a very high significance. The preservation of the archaeological remains is good, with features such as a part of the stage substructure, the yard, associated cobbled surfaces and drains surviving. In addition, the Theatre has the first excavated example of an *ingressus*, the access from the open yard to the upper galleries. From this data it has been possible to calculate the size, height and overall appearance of the Theatre. As such, the archaeological evidence is able to contribute greatly to the understanding of how the playhouses looked and functioned, particularly the experiences of the everyday theatregoers, which is often only derived from documentary sources.

A significant artefactual and ecofactual assemblage has been recovered from the excavations, including evidence for costumes and consumables. These are of a high significance in themselves, as they invite direct comparison with other excavated assemblages from the Rose and Globe, and provide information on the people who used the building. The physical remains of the building's superstructure were transported south of the Thames and were incorporated in the construction of the Globe in 1599.

Archaeological excavation has demonstrated that not only do the remains of the structure itself survive, but that there is evidence of the re-use of earlier buildings that became integral to the functioning of the playhouse. This includes a remodelling of the priory brew house, possibly as a backstage costume store or workshop. These are considered to be of a moderate/high importance because of their contribution to the understanding of the playhouse itself.

There are a great number of documentary records surviving in relation to the Theatre. These are primarily legal documents and court records which relate to long running disputes between the Theatre's owners and various other individuals and agencies. This includes information on the lease, construction of the playhouse and its demolition. The documentary evidence provides a rich and detailed counterpoint to the archaeological findings.

In terms of **historic value**, the Theatre is highly significant as it is a historical first – the first of the purpose built playhouses in England. It marks a turning point in the

history of theatre and performance that continues to this day. The documentary evidence that survives relating to the Theatre increases its historic value, as the records enhance the understanding and interpretation of the archaeological remains. The Theatre was also the home of the Lord Chamberlain's Company in the 1590s, which has a direct association with William Shakespeare as an actor, author and shareholder in the business. It is likely that Shakespeare's *Hamlet* was first performed here, as well as Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*.

The Theatre does retain some **aesthetic value**, primarily as the first example of the polygonal timber framed building type that became the standard for all later public playhouses. The excavated north-eastern quadrant of the Theatre is preserved *in situ* for future study and generations. However, the current planning permission granted for 4 – 6 New Inn Broadway proposes to display the remains and artefacts within a new theatre and performance venue, so that the visual impact and aesthetic can be appreciated by a contemporary theatregoing audience. This proposed use of this part of the site demonstrates the **communal value** held by the Theatre – it is still a current and vibrant part of the local street scape and scene, with nearby buildings using the name (the Theatre Courtyard is situated at 7 – 15 New Inn Yard), and even the hoarding at 4 – 6 New Inn Broadway proudly exclaims the site's origins.

The remains of the Theatre are of clear **national importance**, and have a wider recognition across the globe as the home of Shakespeare and the English dramatic tradition. It is the original example of a defining building type of the Elizabethan period, and although a handful of other playhouses survive, the Theatre is the *prima genita* upon which all the others are based. The understanding of the various playhouses is greatly enhanced when considering them as a group, as each has surviving elements that contribute to our knowledge of the whole, and the evolution of the structural design can be read across the examples. The artefactual and ecofactual assemblages also benefit from direct comparison.

As only a quadrant of the footprint has been excavated, and there does not appear to be any substantial modern truncation on the predicted footprint, there is a great potential for further information about the Theatre and its use to be revealed in future investigation.

Where they have been observed, the remains of the Theatre building demonstrate a good level of survival, and are easily readable. The main foundations are of a robust brick and tile construction. The foundations associated with the present planning permission for the 4 – 6 New Inn Broadway site have already been constructed, in accordance with planning conditions and with the advice of Historic England. These have been situated to avoid the Theatre footprint itself, and are concentrated on the peripheral areas of the site. However, the remaining ¾ of the footprint of the Theatre remains vulnerable to future development proposals.

As the first home playhouse for Shakespeare and other leading actors and impresarios of the Elizabethan age, the Theatre can arguably be considered the birthplace of English theatre as a whole.

Hoarding outside 4 - 6 New Inn Broadway

3.3 The Curtain, Shoreditch, EC2

Location

The remains of what is interpreted as the Curtain playhouse are situated within the north/north-western corner of a modern street block, bounded by Hearn Street, Curtain Road, Hewett Street and Plough Yard, at approximately NGR 533289 182204. Until very recently, the site was occupied by a number of commercial premises, including office buildings, warehouses, garages and light industrial units. At present, the site is undergoing development in accordance with planning permission granted by the London Borough of Hackney for a mixed-use residential, retail and office space (LB Hackney planning reference 2012/3871). The new development, called 'The Stage,' will include the display of the archaeological remains in a purpose built exhibition space that will also contribute to public realm benefit.

The standing buildings on the new development site are undergoing demolition at present. On the western boundary of the new development area, at 24 – 28 Curtain Road, are two Grade II listed buildings (Nos. 24 and 26, List Number 1226425) and one building of townscape merit. No. 24 Curtain Road is an 18th century townhouse with an early to mid-18th century shop front on the ground floor, no. 26 is an early 19th century house, and no. 28 is the 19th century Horse and Groom public house.

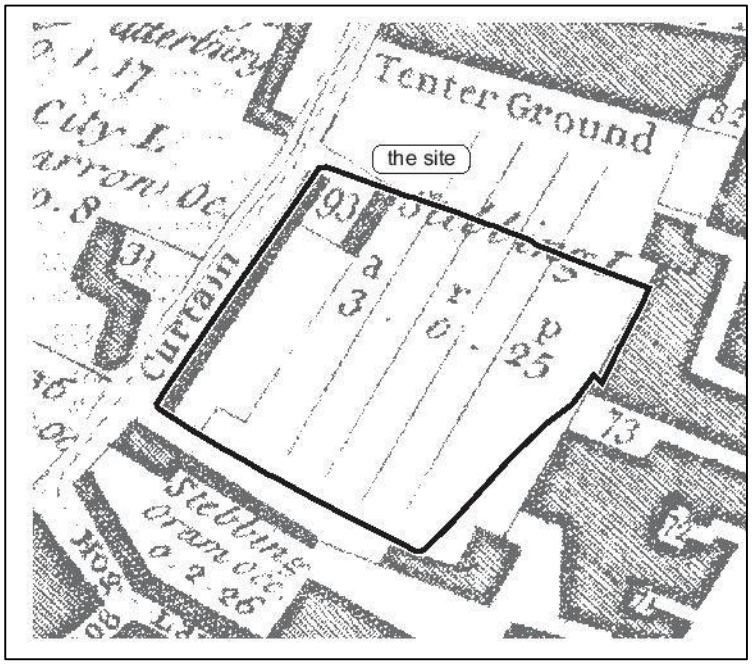
The site lies within an Archaeological Priority Area as defined by the London Borough of Hackney.

History, cartographic and documentary sources

The location of the Curtain has, until very recently, been uncertain, as is most of its history. The site lies to the east of the Roman Ermine Street (the modern A10) and to the south-west of the medieval village of Shoreditch, thought to be situated near to the present junction of Old Street and Kingsland Road. Throughout the medieval period the area was dominated by the Holywell Priory, the Priory of St John the Baptist, founded in the early 12th century to the north of the Curtain site, which was then in open fields. The Agas Map of c. 1562 shows the area of the Curtain to be largely undeveloped. This is in contrast with the Theatre, which was built within the Great Court of the priory precinct, and was occupied by a number of secular and ancillary buildings and structures.

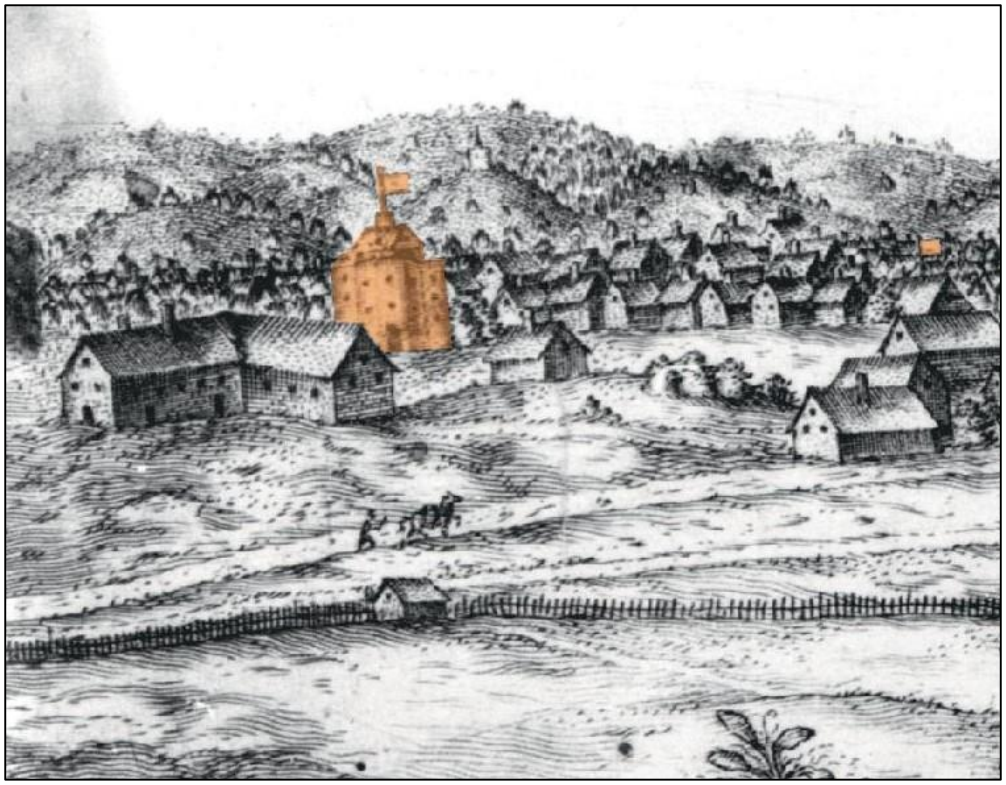
The location of the Curtain has long been associated with the Curtain estate, or Close, recorded from 1567 onwards. This has often been referred to as a, 'house, tenemente or lodge commonlie called the Curtayne.' There is uncertainty if the Curtain playhouse is the same structure as the house, or a different building within the Close. Although the Curtain playhouse was built in 1577, it is not until 1611 that a description is provided as a, ` large messuage or tenemente, built of timber and thatched, now in decay, called the Curtaine, with a good parcel of ground adjoining thereto, wherein

they used to keep stage playes.' What is certain is that the Chassereau map of 1745 shows a Curtain Court as being near to the junction of Hewitt Street and Curtain Road (land parcel no. 93 on the Chassereau map).



Chassereau Map of 1745, with no. 93 labelled as 'Curtain Close' (reproduced from Featherby, 2011)

An engraving, thought to be executed in the very late 1590s, may provide the only contemporary representation of the Curtain and the Theatre, although this has been subject to much discussion and interpretation (reproduced below). The engraving, which appears in Abraham Booth's panorama *The View of the Cittye of London from the North towards the Sowth*, appears to show both a polygonal structure, possibly with external stair turrets, flying the flag indicative of a playhouse on the left hand side of the engraving. On the right hand side a second building is shown with a flag, which is not as clear. It had been thought that the polygonal building was a representation of the Curtain, as the engraving may have been produced after the Theatre was demolished, and there is no archaeological evidence of external stairs at the Theatre site. Following the 2014 archaeological works at the Curtain site which suggest it was rectangular in form rather than round, it may be that the polygonal building was indeed intended to be the Theatre. Caution should be applied, however, when attempting to use stylised early map views as definitive evidence.



The View of the Cittye of London from the North towards the Sowth, showing the ?Theatre on the left and the ?Curtain on the right (reproduced from Knight, 2015)

It is thought that the Curtain was built after the Theatre, as there is no direct mention of if until December 1577. Who built the playhouse is also uncertain. The preferred candidate it Henry Lenman, a Yeoman of Her Majesties Guard, who was a tenant in Curtain Close in 1581. Lenman, in 1585, entered into an arrangement with James Burbage and John Brayne, the owners of the nearby Theatre, by which the two sets of owners shared the profits of the two venues for a period of seven years. The Curtain was then described as an 'esore' which has been suggested as a protracted means of Burbage purchasing the Curtain, although this is not proven. At some point after 1592 shares in the Curtain were sold off, as two of the Lord Chamberlain's Men included shares in the venue as bequests in their wills. The Lord Chamberlain's Men company were in residence at the Curtain in 1598 – 1599, so this reorganisation may date to this period.

When the Curtain closed is also uncertain. The playhouse held fencing competitions and displays from 1570 – 1590. The Privy Council attempted to shut the Curtain in 1600, restricting playing to only two venues, the Globe and the Fortune, but it remained open and in 1601 a draft licence for the Queen Anne's Men named the Curtain and the Boar's Head as their usual houses. It was still in use as an occasional theatre in 1625, and there is a 1628 reference to six tuns of 'filth cast into open shoare near the Curtain Playhouse' which suggests the building is still standing. It likely ceased to be used as a playhouse in 1642, when the Privy Council closed all of the remaining theatres.

There is some reference to the building having been converted to tenements by 1660, as there is a record of a rent collector collecting dues from properties including a 'garden and houses called the Curtain playhouse in Holywell Land in Shoreditch.' Recent archaeological works do indeed support the re-use of the building in the mid to late 17th century as a tenement.

The Curtain appears to have hosted a number of playing companies, including Lord Arundell's Men, the Queen Anne's Men, Prince Charles's Men and, most significantly, Lord Chamberlain's Men. This last group took up residence at the Curtain in 1598, following the dismantling of the Theatre, and remained there until mid-1599 when they relocated to the new Globe. Shakespeare was one of the company members of the Lord Chamberlain's Men, and it is thought that *Romeo and Juliet* was first performed here in 1598. His *Henry V* may also have premiered at the Curtain, and Shakespeare is listed as an actor in a 1598 playing of Jonson's *Every man in his humour*, which was also likely first shown here.

From the mid to late 17th century the general area of the Curtain became subject to an intensification of development. The open fields and tentergrounds of the early post-medieval period gradually became occupied with tenements, houses and other buildings and the street patterns became formalised. Terraces lined the streets by the 18th century to keep pace with an expanding population. By the 19th century the entire area of the Curtain was in use as houses, manufacturing buildings and yards. The Horse and Groom public house and rear yard dates to this period. Map evidence has shown that the access to the rear yards, north of the Horse and Groom, has been an open entranceway from the 17th century until the mid-1900s. This may be the vestigial survival of the entrance into the Curtain itself.

Archaeological evidence

The area of the Curtain has been subject to three archaeological evaluations by Museum of London Archaeology in 2011 and 2014 (MOLA, Site Code CUR11). The archaeological works have been in response to a planning application – now granted – for the development of the site (LB Hackney planning reference 2012/3871).

The archaeological works have been undertaken to accommodate standing buildings on the site, and have been situated in open yards at the rear of 24 – 26 Curtain Road and basements to gain as full an understanding of the site as possible. The trenches have in general been very deep – some 4.5m of stratigraphy survives in places – and have often been shored.

Across the site the natural deposits lie at c. 10.50 – 11.40mOD, with the modern street level at c. 15.20mOD. A consistent depth of garden soils containing 16th century pottery lies across the site, sealing alluvial deposits. This is in accordance with the area being open fields of a marshy nature before the area was developed in the late 15th/early 16th century.

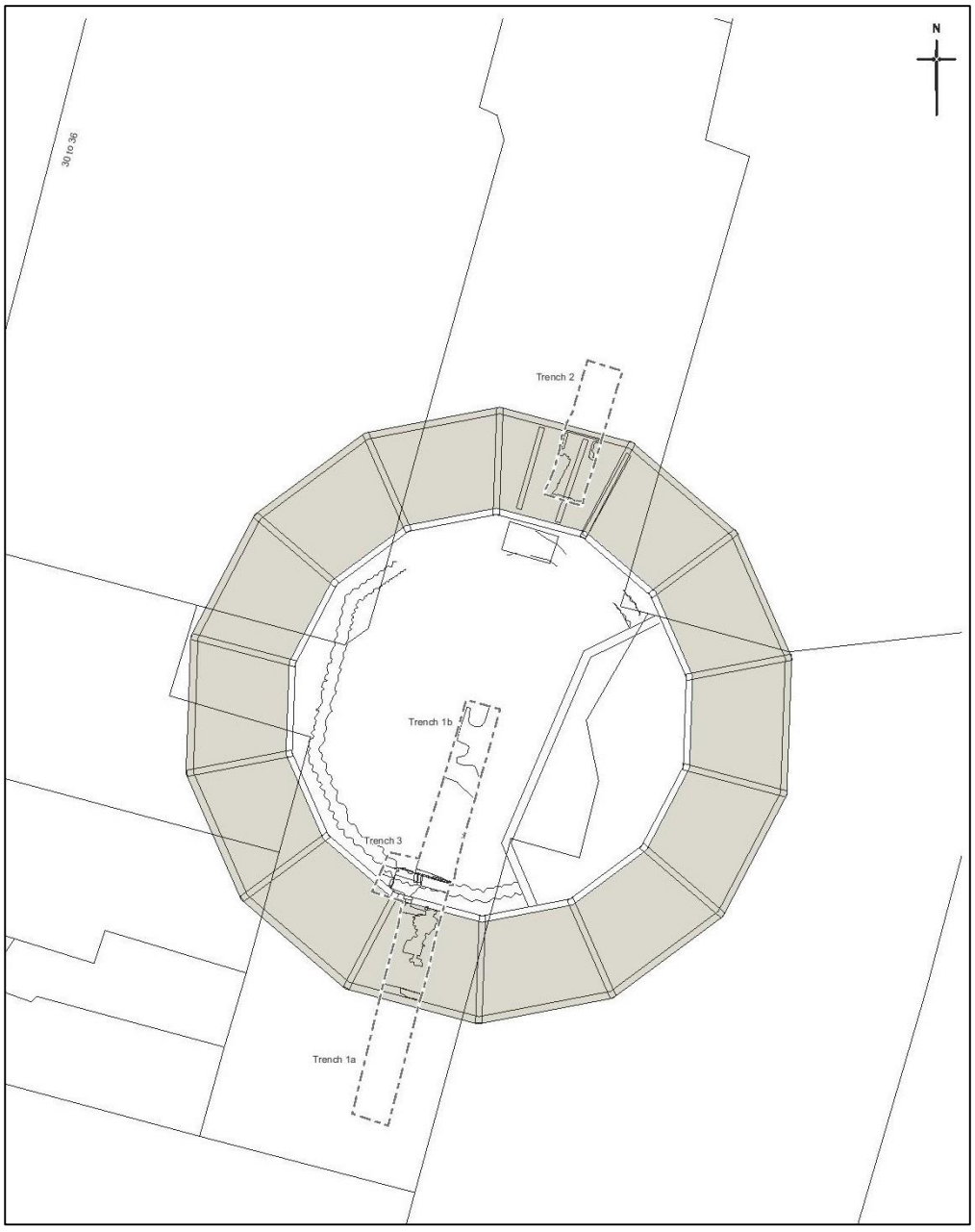
The first evaluation, in 2011, uncovered remains that have been associated with a large 16th century structure, interpreted as being the Curtain playhouse. These consisted of external limestone post pads, inner masonry wall foundations and an internal sloping gravel yard, dated to 1580 – 1650. This model of internal load bearing walls and external post-pad constructed walls is consistent with the arrangement found at the Theatre and the Rose, where asymmetrical walls are better able to support the timber-framed superstructure of the theatres and provide a gallery space. As with the other examples, the distance between the inner and outer walls here is 3.8m. The surface of the gravel yard, which gradually slopes to the north, is c. 0.30 – 0.40m lower than the contemporary external ground level, which again is consistent with the other excavated playhouses.

Of particular note from the 2011 evaluation was the recording of an arched brick structure acting as a threshold into the inner-wall gallery area. This is interpreted as an *ingressus*, one of the two entrances from the yard to the galleries and upper levels of the building. The inner foundation walls on either side of the *ingressus* stand to 0.30m above the ground level and do not have mortar on the top course, indicating that this is the original maximum height: this agrees with the documentary evidence for the Hope playhouse, as the construction contract states the brick wall was to be 13inches above ground level, upon which timber base plates would have sat. The bricks themselves date from 1580 – 1600. The later knucklebone floor is interpreted as evidence for the reuse of the Curtain's foundations as tenement buildings, and dates from 1630 – 1680.

The southern inner foundation walls, arched ingressus and yard surface of the Curtain and later 17th century knucklebone flooring (reprodcued from Knight, 2011)

The 2011 evaluation interpreted the remains of the Curtain as being a 14 sided polygonal structure, in line with the known archaeological remains excavated at the

Theatre, Rose, Globe and Hope. The dimensions recorded allowed for a reconstruction of the playhouse as being 22m in diameter with central open yard surrounded by a 3.8m wide gallery space, with an *ingressus* entrance to the galleries and upper levels, parallel to the main entrance from Curtain Road.

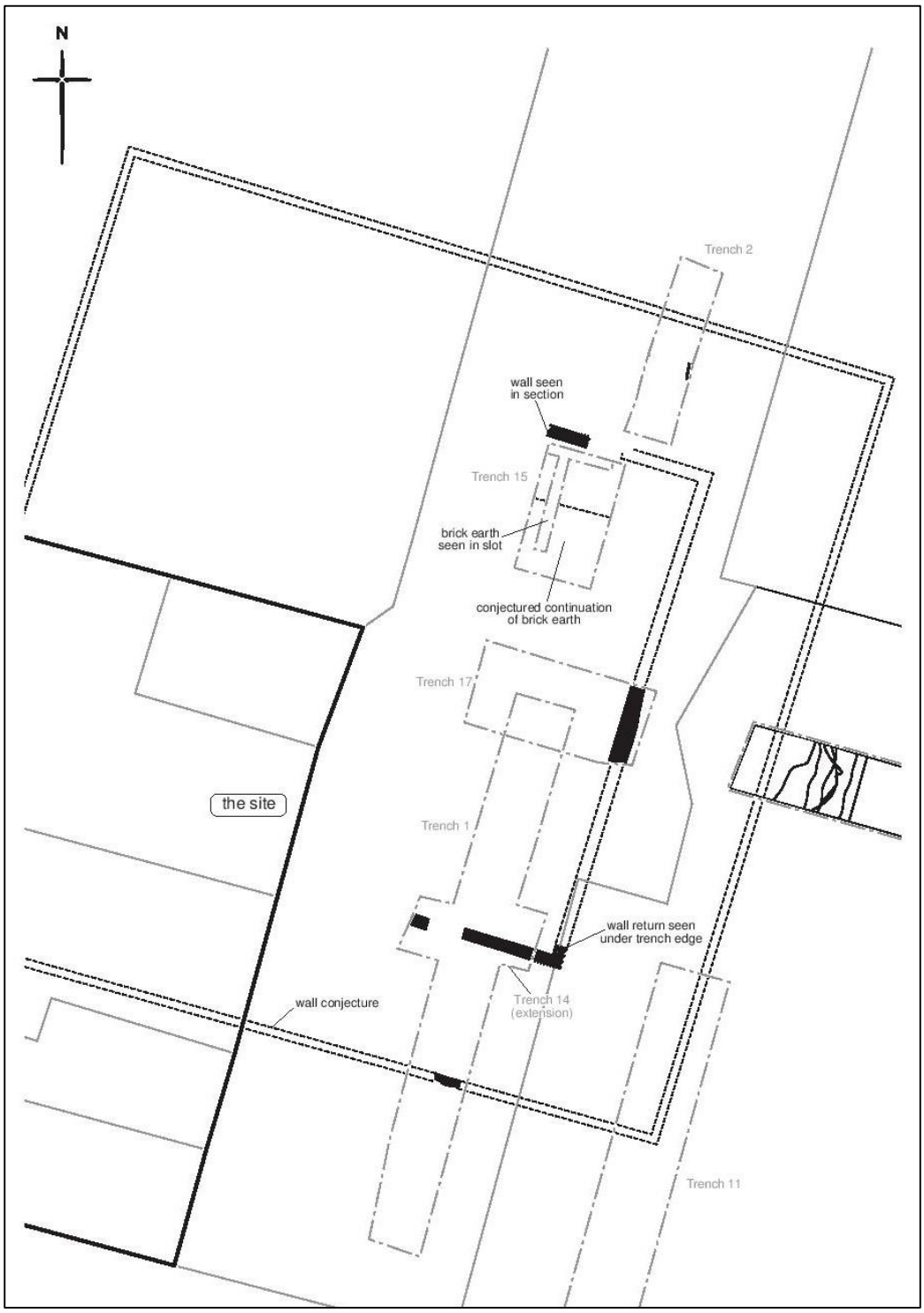


Conjectural interpretation of the Curtain as a polygonal structure (reproduced from Knight, 2011)

The second and third archaeological evaluations on the site sought to clarify the extent and nature of the playhouse remains. These consisted of the excavation of a further 14 trenches on the site, including in basement areas.

The 2014 evaluation trenches confirmed the date of the structure, and has potentially affirmed the attribution of the remains as the Curtain. However, in the reopening of the southern trenches from the earlier evaluation, instead of finding an anticipated

angled turn of the inner wall foundations to confirm a polygonal structure, it was found that the inner wall turned at a 90° angle to the north. A continuation of this wall was seen, on the same alignment, in another trench further to the north. This section of wall also showed evidence for what has tentatively been interpreted as a door leading from a backstage area onto the stage. A further section of the inner wall was seen on the northern edge of the structure.



Newly conjectured interpretation of the Curtain as square (from Knight, 2015)

The new evidence suggests that rather than a polygonal structure, the Curtain was square, again with an internal width of 22m. The building contract for the Fortune playhouse, which was built in 1600 by Philip Henslowe and Edward Alleyn, the proprietors of the Rose, also has a surviving building contract. This states that:

> 'the frame of the said house to be set square and to contain 80 feet of lawful assize every way square without and 55 feet of like assize square every way within, with a good sewer and strong foundation of piles, brick, lime and sand, both without and within to be wrought 1 foot of assize at the least above the ground. And the said frame to contain three storeys in height: the first or lower storey to contain 12 feet of lawful assize in height, the second storey 11 feet of lawful assize in height, and the third or upper storey to contain 9 feet of lawful assize in height. All which storeys shall contain 12 1/2 feet of lawful assize in breadth throughout, besides a jutty forwards in either of the said two upper storeys of 10 inches of lawful assize, with four convenient divisions for gentlemen's rooms and other sufficient and convenient divisions for twopenny rooms, with necessary seats to be placed and set as well in those rooms as throughout all the rest of the galleries of the said house, and with suchlike stairs, conveyances, and divisions without and within as are made and contrived in and to the late erected playhouse on the Bank in the said parish of St Saviour's called the Globe.'

This description of the Fortune, as a square building 80' (24.38m) wide, is slightly larger than the remains of the Curtain, but may give a representation of a similar structure. There is no inherent reason why the Curtain is not square – there are no surviving accounts that detail the form of the structure, and it has only been assumed to be polygonal based upon the model of the other playhouses.

The surviving elements of the Curtain are very robust. The highest surviving section of the eastern inner wall is at 13.30mOD, with the northern and southern inner walls at c. 12.50mOD, the same height as the contemporary ground surface. The yard in the centre of the playhouse is at c. 12.00mOD.

In addition to the Curtain remains, the evaluations noted the presence of other 16th/17th century buildings along the Curtain Road frontage that survive in part underneath the existing basements on the site. It is not yet known if these are directly associated with the playhouse. There is evidence that the Curtain was re-used and adapted in the mid-17th century for tenement buildings. Homogeneous dumping deposits show that the site was cleared in the 18th century when the ground level was significantly raised.

Past impact and potential survival

The remains of the Curtain, as seen in the archaeological works at the Curtain Road/Hewett Street/Hearn Street site, are situated at a depth of between c. 12.00 – 13.30mOD. The basements along the Curtain Road frontage at 20 – 22 Curtain Road

have a depth of c. 12.40mOD at the bottom of the basement slabs, and 16th century walls survive underneath the slabs. The depth of the archaeological remains are such that preservation of the Curtain may be anticipated underneath the basement levels at 26 and 28 Curtain Road and 30 – 36 Curtain Road, although this is not proven. The high potential for survival of 16th and 17th century remains can, in part, be attributed to the extensive ground raising of the area in the 18th century.

Planning permission has been granted for the widescale redevelopment of the Curtain site, excluding the listed and locally significant buildings at 24 – 28 Curtain Road (LB Hackney planning reference 2012/3871, granted 7th October 2014). The permitted development – known as The Stage – will see the construction of four medium and high rise buildings around a landscaped open area. These buildings, which will be basemented, will have a multi-use of residential flats, office space, retail and restaurant use. The remains of the Curtain have been fully integrated into the development scheme, and will be preserved *in situ* within an accessible exhibition and display area, and are intended to form the focal point of the development. Discussion with the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service and the London Inspector of Ancient Monuments have been ongoing to facilitate the preservation and public access to the remains.

The planning permission for The Stage contains two conditions relating to archaeology. These read as follows:

> Condition 30
>
> A) No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority.
>
> B) No development or demolition shall take place other than in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Part (A).
>
> C) The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under Part (A), and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of the results and archive deposition has been secured.
>
> REASON: Heritage assets of archaeological interest survive on the site. The planning authority wishes to secure the provision of archaeological investigation and the subsequent recording of the remains prior to development, in accordance with recommendations given by the borough and the NPPF.
>
> Condition 31
>
> No works except the demolition to basement slab level shall take place before details of the foundations and piling configuration, to include a detailed design and method statement have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, such details to show the preservation of surviving archaeological remains which are to remain in situ and measures to prevent and minimise the potential for damage to subsurface water infrastructure, and

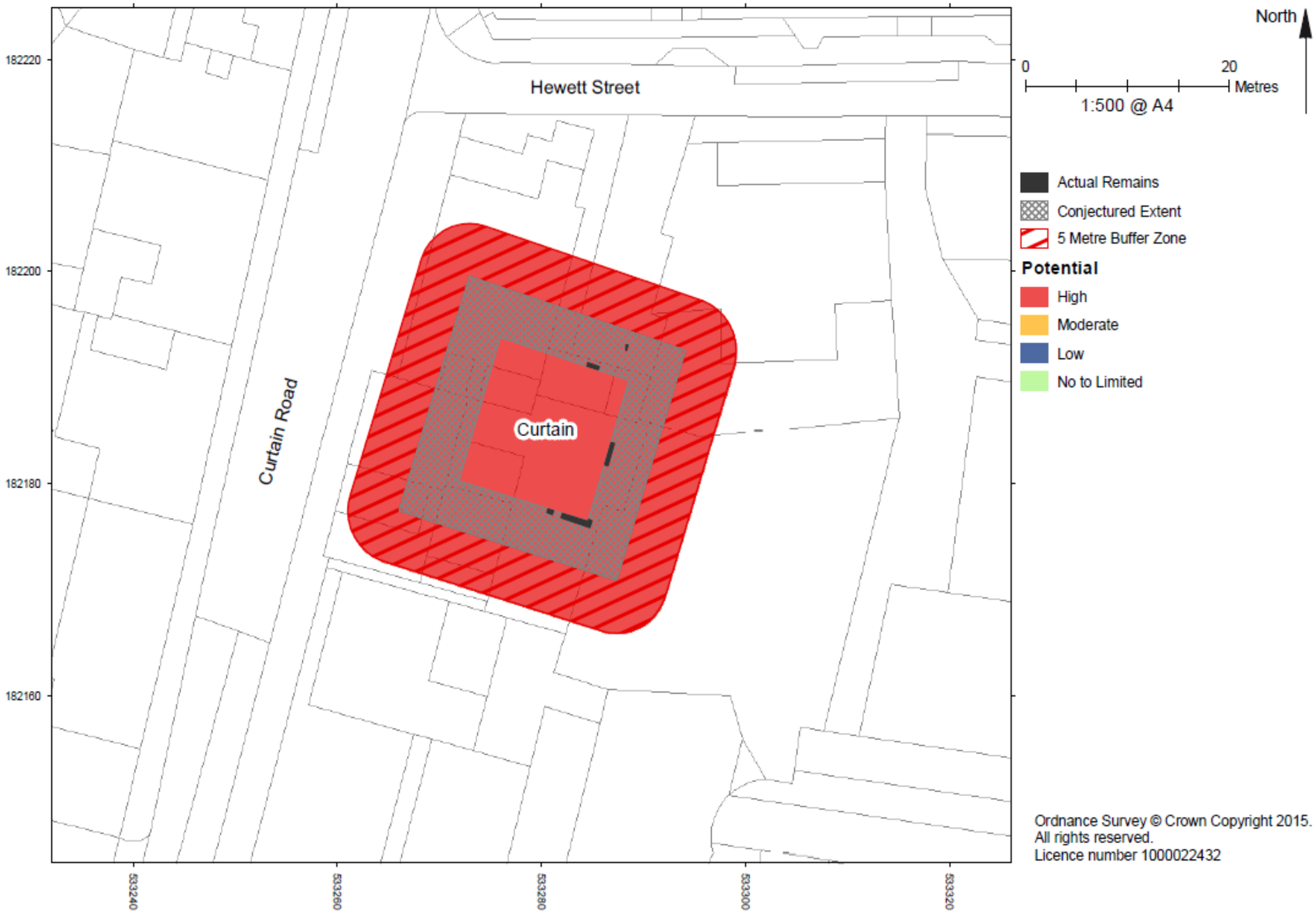
the programme for the works. Any piling and foundations must be undertaken in accordance with the terms of the approved piling method statement.

Three further conditions (conditions 32 – 34) require details of the new display and exhibition space to be agreed before implantation, including a maintenance plan and provision for disabled access.

Recently, a S96A application (non-material amendment to a planning application) has been granted for a slight revision to the wording of Condition 31 (LB Hackney Planning Reference 2015/3711). The new wording will allow further archaeological investigation to take place before details of foundations are have been submitted. This will enable archaeological works to inform the location of the foundations, which is logical. The revised condition now begins: *No development, excluding demolition, associated enabling works and archaeological works carried out in accordance with details approved by the Local Planning Authority under condition 30 of the Decision Notice, shall take place….*

The demolition of the buildings on The Stage development site is currently underway. It is unlikely that there will be forthcoming change to the buildings at 26 and 28 Curtain Road, as these are listed and identified as being of townscape merit, and abut the new development.

The below illustration shows the likely level of archaeological potential in relation to the Curtain. As, based upon present knowledge, the archaeological remains are thought to continue underneath the formation level of basements on the front of Curtain Road, and there is no other modern truncation known from this area, the potential for archaeological remains is high.



Significance and importance

The archaeological remains of the Curtain are considered to be of national importance and a high significance, being one of the earlier purpose built public playhouses. It is often associated with the Theatre, the first of the polygonal playhouses, due to its proximity and shared business arrangements.

If, as now thought, the Curtain is a square or rectangular structure rather than polygonal, it has a significance **evidential value**. This would mark it as the first of the purpose built public playhouses to be of a non-polygonal shape, and will require a reinterpretation of the assumed linear development of the playhouse form. Two of the early playing inns – the Red Lion (built 1567) and the venue at Newington Butts (built 1576) – were also likely rectangular, but unlike at the Curtain these were inserted into existing yards. Further excavation works planned at the site will further elucidate the form and use of the Curtain and the presence of any ancillary structures. As yet, there has been little material culture recovered from the Curtain site to compare with the assemblages recovered from the other playhouses. The forthcoming works will no doubt add to this archive.

In terms of **historical value**, the Curtain is directly associated with both Ben Jonson and William Shakespeare, and it is known that some of their most famous plays were premiered here, including *Romeo and Juliet*. It has long been held that Shakespeare's *Henry V* was also written for the Curtain, with the reference to 'this wooden 'O'' in the prologue referring to the shape of the playhouse. However, with the new archaeological evidence, the play may instead have first been seen at the Globe, where the Lord Chamberlain's Men moved to in 1599.

The physical remains of the Curtain, as seen to date, are exceptionally well preserved. Once fully exposed, if the current rate of survival is consistent, they will enable a good understanding of the form of the playhouse, contributing to its **aesthetic value**. The remains are intended to be presented as a visitor attraction, which will display the archaeological site as well as provide exhibition and performance space. This will enhance the aesthetic value of the site, and also demonstrates its **communal value**. That the new development across the site is called The Stage shows the attraction of the archaeological site and a continuing interest in the history of the Curtain and Elizabethan drama as a whole. Until very recently, a local 'brown plaque' commemorating the site as the location of the Curtain was situated on a building on the Hewett Street frontage.

The Curtain is also considered of being of **national importance**. The rectangular structure represents a deviation from the previously assumed progression of the playhouse form. As such, it is the first and only example of a purpose built rectangular playhouse, and is a further mark in our understanding of Elizabethan theatre. The remains, therefore are greatly enhanced through association with the other surviving

playhouses – the Theatre, Rose, Globe and Hope – as structural comparisons can be made. The site of the Curtain is contained within a single development site, and has had a number of archaeological investigations to date. These works have demonstrated the high potential of the site to yield further remains, both structural, artefactual and environmental. Future work will enable these assemblages to be read across to the other excavated sites. As with the other playhouses, a wealth of contemporary documentation enhances the physical remains.

The structural remains of the Curtain are very robust, and where seen to date are extremely well preserved. The brick walls of the playhouse, associated foundations, entrance and yard surfaces have survived very well and are easily readable. Although the present planning permission secures the remains under the proposed development – and in fact displays and celebrates the remains – future development may place the archaeological deposits at risk.

4 Group Value

4.1 Group Value

There is much merit in considering the Elizabethan and Jacobean playhouses and bear baiting arenas together. They are of a distinct architectural style and have a singular point of reference in the entertainments and activities of the period in which they were used, which makes them unique amongst themselves. Although playing and animal baiting were activities that were enjoyed nationally, this monument type was developed in London, and retains a London characteristic. The five monuments considered in this report sit comfortably aside the Rose and Globe, already scheduled, in terms of significance, preservation and value.

The evidential value of considering the monuments as a whole is high. As a physical group, alongside the excavated Rose and Globe playhouses, there is a definite continuity of form from the earliest of the purpose built playhouses – the Theatre – through to the last, the Davies' Bear Pit. Architectural design evolved throughout the examples and was copied from place to place, as shown in archaeological remains and in surviving construction contracts and accounts. In some instances, the copying was quite literal, such as the re-use of structural elements between Bear Gardens 3 (Payne's Standing)/3A and the Hope, and the Theatre and the Globe. Contemporary descriptions of the venues often compare them to each other, and it is clear that players, owners, and audience members frequented several playhouses and had shared experiences therein.

The archaeological information gleaned from each side is enhanced through consideration of the group. Each new monument investigated elucidates archaeological and design features from those previously explored, and our understanding of the monuments is vastly improved when looking at them as a composite whole. The activities that took place within the amphitheatres and arenas have value in direct comparison, such as comparing artefactual and ecofactual evidence that tells us how people used the sites, what they consumed, wore and witnessed.

The historical value of the playhouses is also enhanced when looking at them as a group. The cast of characters involved in the creation, construction and population of the monuments is shared across the sites. There are direct links between owners and impresarios, such as Alleyn and Henslowe, who had significant business interests in the Bear Gardens/Payne's Standings, the Hope, The Rose and the later Fortune playhouses. The players too moved from venue to venue, with the playing companies setting up shop in one playhouse after another. The Lord Chamberlain's Men, for example, played in the Theatre, the Curtain and the Globe, with many of Shakespeare's plays being first performed in any one of the amphitheatres. Contemporary social commentators and visitors wrote of their experiences in one or

more of the sites, and provide a useful commentary on the activities and spaces, which can be directly compared. The commentaries indirectly reveal a shift in popular taste and social mores that are reflected in the physical remains.

The archaeological remains, particularly when considered as a whole, have the ability to bring new understanding and interpretation to the dramatic performances. The physical remains have influenced and elucidated the academic study of the plays, and vice versa.

In terms of aesthetic value, again the comparison between the venues adds to the greater understanding and appreciation of the whole. The interpretation of the physical remains, including decoration and outward appearance, is enrichened when looking at evidence across the examples.

The communal value of the group is very high, not just for the contemporary audiences, who appreciated play going and animal baiting as popular forms of entertainment and social commentary, but also for the modern audience. That two of the playhouses – the Theatre and the Curtain – have plans for their exhibition and display within modern development contexts indicates how highly these buildings, and the activities that took place therein, are still regarded in current consciousness. At the Curtain this association with the past is so strong that the new development is marketed as The Stage. Street names, current businesses, offices and entertainments continue to use the names of the amphitheatres and bear pits, and form part of the modern landscape.

The monuments are interconnected in terms of their design, physical structure, use and role in the social and historic fabric of London. The value of each is enhanced through comparison with the other.

Sign outside The Stage development, Curtain Road

5 Acknowledgements and bibliography

5.1 Acknowledgements

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Appendix 1

Extract from the building contract for the Hope Playhouse

Extract from the contract between Phillip Henslowe and Jacob Meade and Gilbert Katharens, carpenter, dated 29th August 2013 (Reproduced from Gurr 2009 and Mackinder 2013)

[…] That he the saied Gilbert Katherens […] uppn or before the last diae of November next ensuing the daie or date of theise presejtes above written, not inlie take downe or pull downe all that same place or house wherein Beares and Bulls have been heretofore usuallie bayted, and also one other house or staple wherin Bulls or horses did usually stande, sett, lyinge, and beinge upon or neere the Banksyde in the saide parish of St Saviour in Sowthworke, commlie called or knowne by the names of the Beare garden, but shall also at his or theire owne proper costs and charges upon or before the saide laste daie of November newly erect, builde, and sett upp one other Game or Plaiehouse fitt and convenient in all thinges, bothe for players to playe in, and for the game of Beares and Bulls to be bayted in the same, and also a fit and convenient Tyre house and a stage to be taken and carried awaie, and to stand upon tressells good, substanciall, and sufficient for the carrying and bearing of suche a stage And shall new builde, erect and sett up againe the saide plaie house or game place neere or upon the saide place, where the saide game place did heretofore stand And to builde the same of suche large compasse, fforme, widenes, and height as the Plaie house called the Swan in the liberitie of Parris garden in the saide parishe of St Saviour now is And shall also builde two staircases without and adioyninge to the saide Playe house is suche convenient places, as shalbe moste fit and convenient for the same to stand upon, and of such largnes and height as the stearcasses of the saide playehouse called the Swan now are or bee And shall also builde the Heavens all over the saide stage, to be borne or carryd without any postes or supporters to be fixed or sett upon the siade stage, and all gutters of leade needful for the carryage of all suche raine water as shall fall uppon the same And shall also make two Boxes in the lowermost storie firr and decent for gentlemen to sitt in And shall make the particions betwn the Rommes as they are at the saide Plaie house called the Swan And to make turned cullumes upon and over the state And shall make the principals and fore front of the saide Plaie house of good and sugfficiente oken tymber, and no furr tymber to be putt or used in the lower most, or midell stories, except the upright postes on the backpart of the saide stories all the byndinge joystes to be of oken tymber The inner principall postes of the first storie to be twelve footes in height and tenn ynches square, the inner principall postes in the midell storie to be eight ynches square, the inner most postes in the upper storie to be seaven ynches square The prick postes in the first storie to be eight ynches square, in the seconde storie to be seaven ynches square,

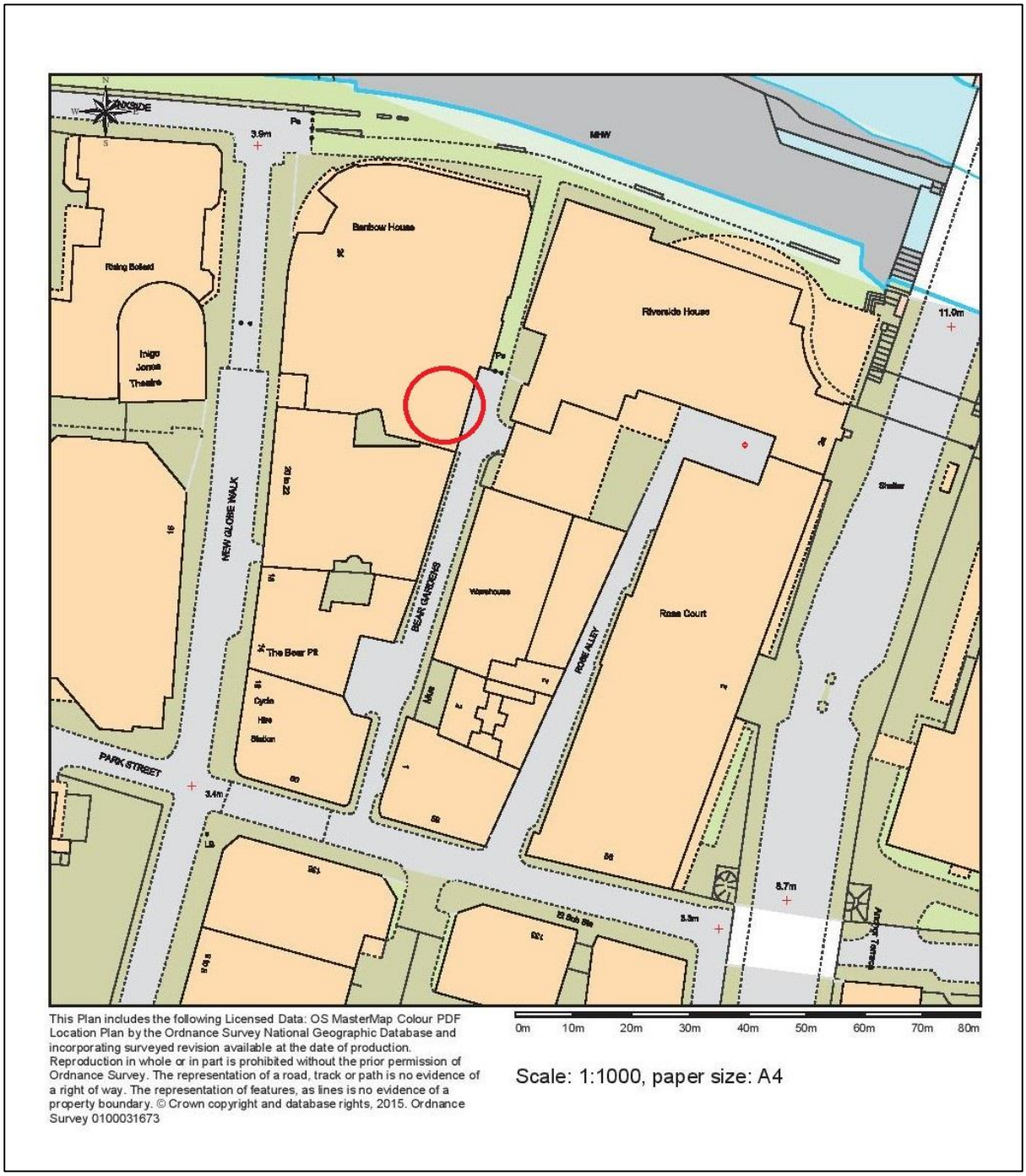
and in the upper most storie six ynches square Also the brest sommres in the lower most storie to be nyne ynches depe and six ynches in thicknes and in the midell storie to be eight ynches depe and six ynches in thicknes Thw byndinge jostes of the first storie to be nyne and eight ynches in depthe and thicknes, and in the midell storie to be viij and vij ynvches in depthe and thicknes. Item to make a good, sure and sufficient foundacion of brickes for the saide Play house or game place and to make it xiijteene ynches at the leaste above the grounde.

Item to new builde, erect and sett upp the saide Bull house and stable with good and sufficient scantlinge tymber, plankes, and bordes, and particions of that largnes and fittnes as shalbe sufficient to kepe and holde six bulls and three horsses or geldings, with rackes and mangers to the same […] and shall also at his and theire ownw proper costs and charges new tyle with englishe tyles all the upper rooffe of the said Plaie house, game place, and Bull house or sable, and shall fynde and paie for at his like proper costs and charges for all the lyme, heare, sande, brickes, tyles, lathes, nayls, woremanshipe and all other thinges needful and necessarie for the full finishing of the saide Plaie house, Bull house, and Stable, And the siade playhouse or game house to be made in allthinges and in such forme and fashion, as the siade plaie house called the Swan the scantling of the tymbers, tyles, and foundacioin as ys aforesaide without fraude or coven….

Appendix 2

Bear Gardens 3 (Payne's Standings)/3A

Site location map and photographs



Site location of Payne's Standings/Bear Gardens 3/3A (arena location approximate only)

Bear Gardens looking south. The site of Payne's Standings/Bear Gardens 3/3A is on the left (west), at Benbow House.

Bear Gardens looking north. The site of Payne's Standings/Bear Gardens 3/3A is to the left of the cement mixer.

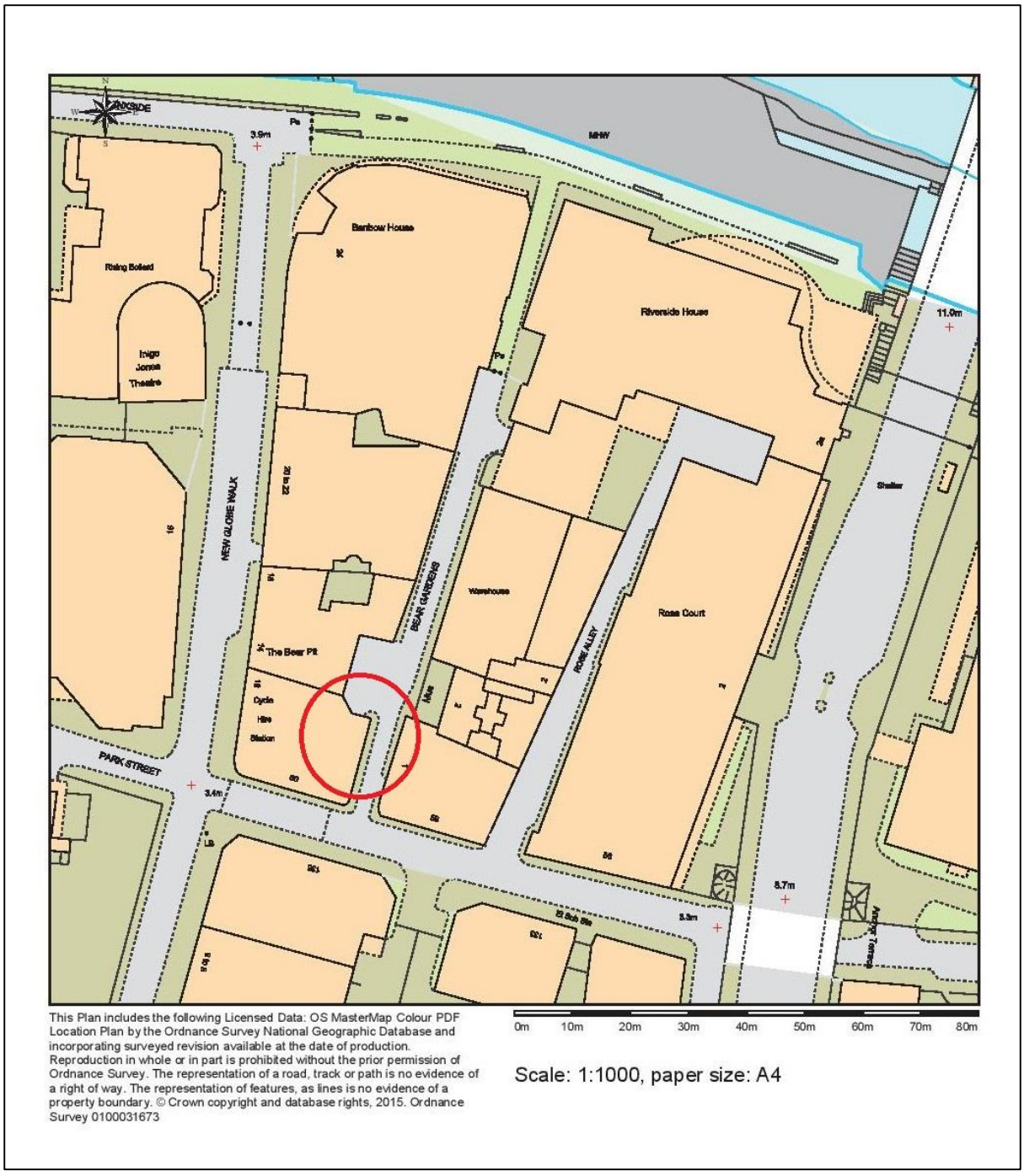
Benbow House from junction of New Globe Walk and Bankside

View looking south on New Globe Walk, with Benbow House to the left.

Appendix 3

Davies' Bear Pit

Site location map and photographs



Site location of Davies' Bear Pit (arena location approximate only)

Bear Gardens looking north, with the Union Works/60 Park Street to the left (west) and 58 Park Street to the right (east)

Land east of Bear Gardens, once thought to be the location of the centre of Davies' Bear Pit

Junction of Park Street and Bear Gardens, looking north

Park Street, looking east, with the Union Works/60 Park Street on the left

The Union Works/60 Park Street, looking north-west along Park Street

New Globe Walk, looking north

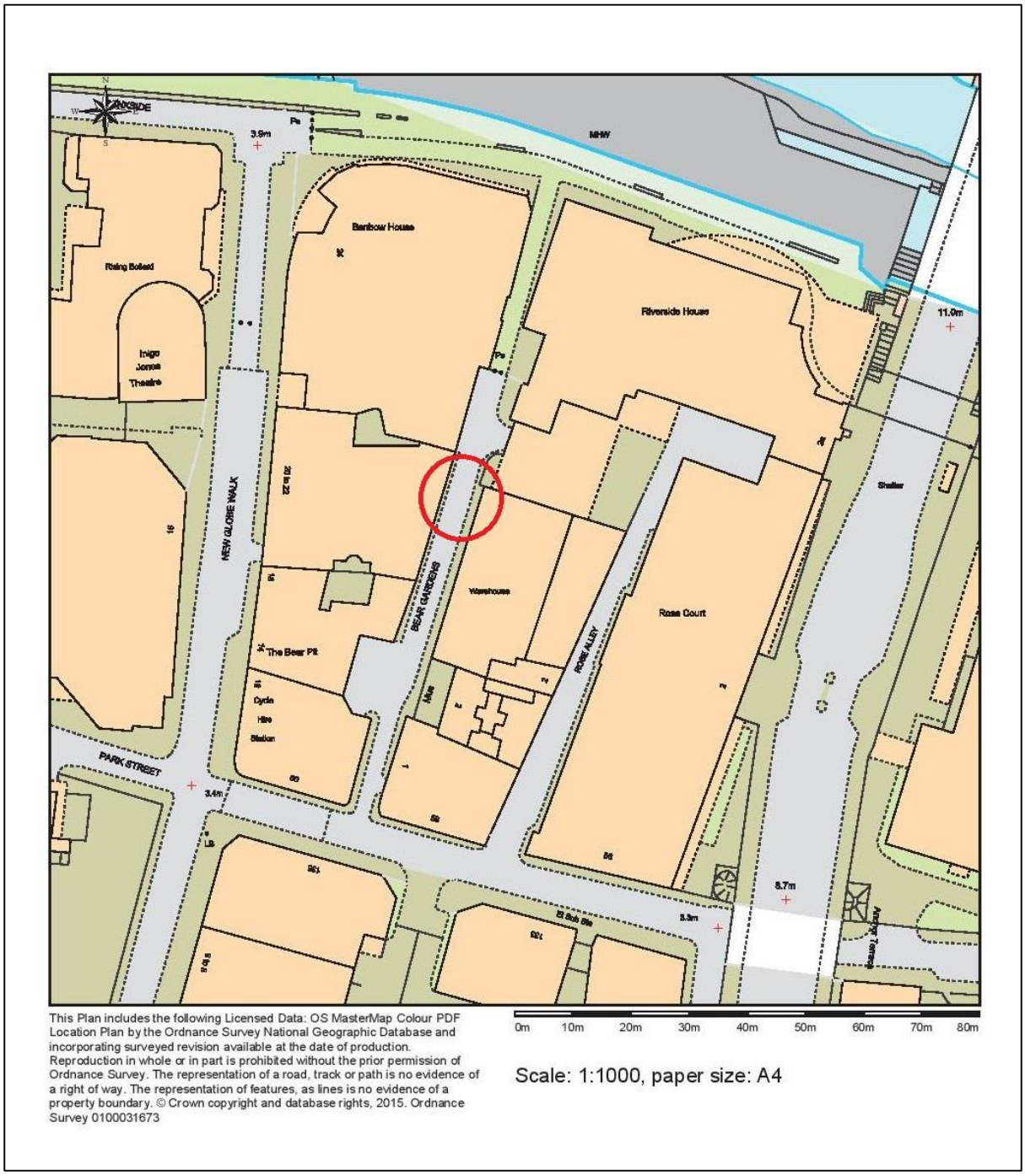
Eastern side of New Globe Walk

The Bear Pit apartment building, on the site of Davies' Bear Pit

Appendix 4

The Hope Playhouse

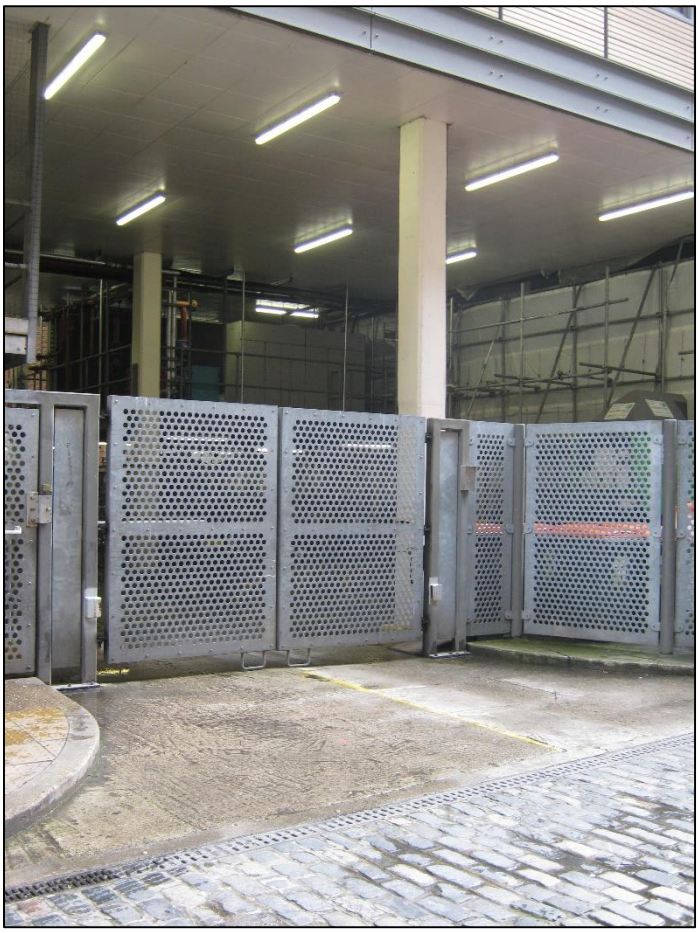
Site location map and photographs



Site location of the Hope Playhouse (playhouse location approximate only)

Bear Gardens looking south, with the location of the Hope Playhouse to the left (east)

Rear of Riverside House, looking north on Bear Gardens



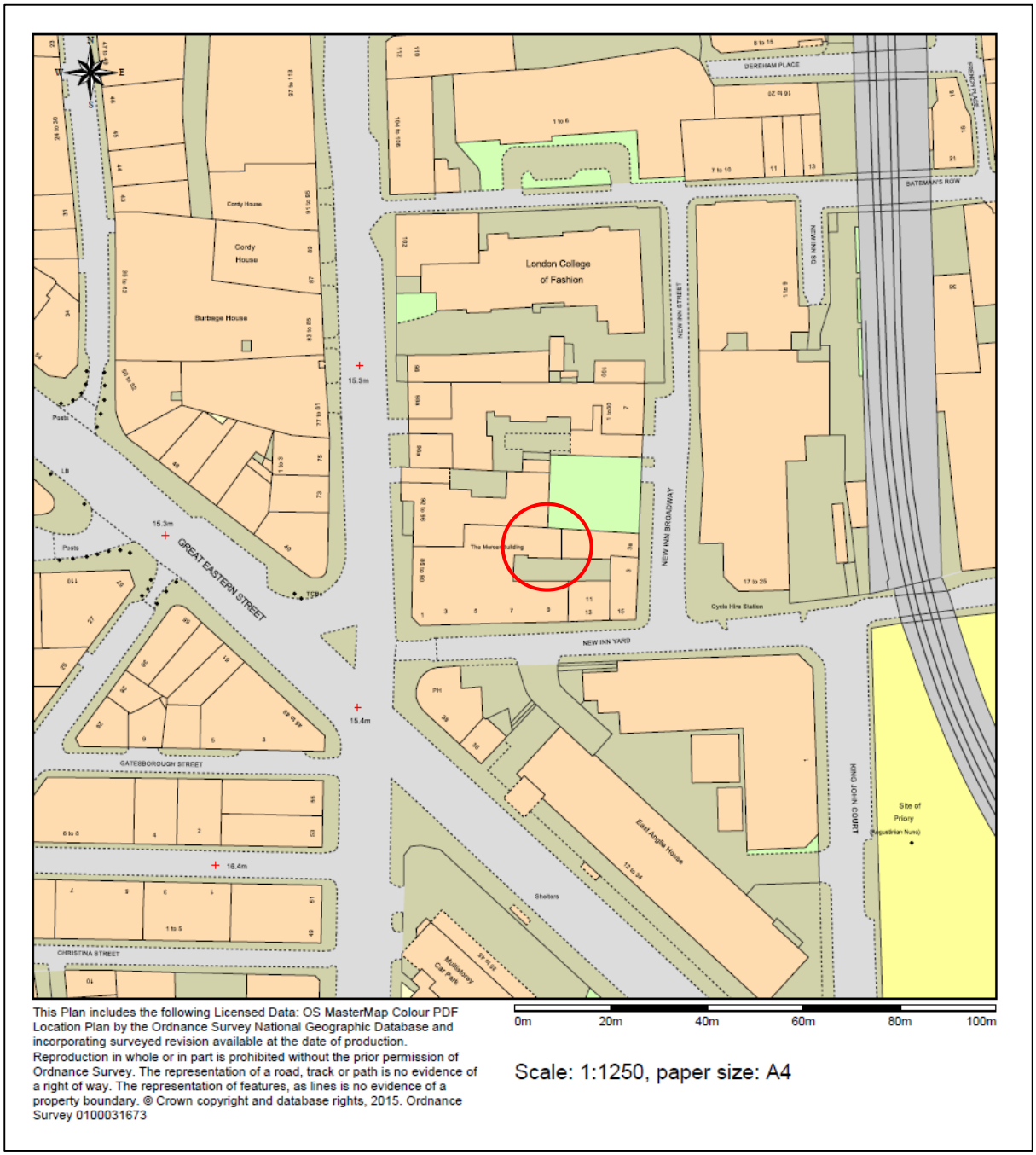
Car park at rear of Riverside House, location of the Hope Playhouse

Car park at rear of Riverside House, location of the Hope Playhouse

Appendix 5

The Theatre Playhouse

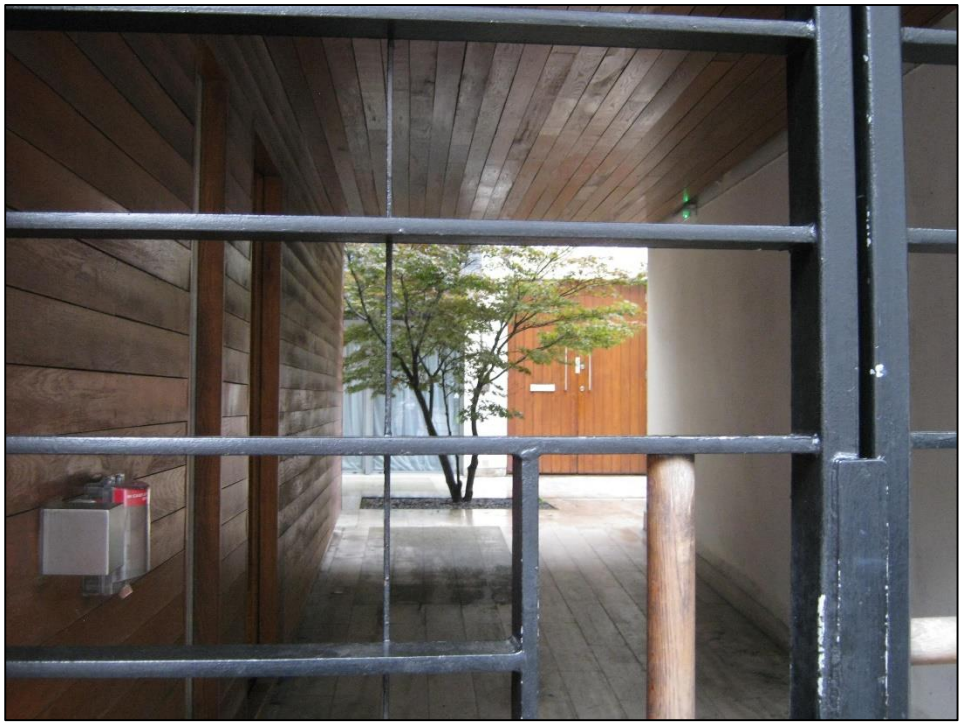
Site location map and plates



Site location of the Theatre Playhouse (playhouse location approximate only)

86 - 90 Curtain Road, looking north-east

New Inn Yard, looking east



Looking from New Inn Yard to rear courtyard

The Theatre Courtyard, New Inn Yard

11 - 15 New Inn Yard, looking west

15 New Inn Yard and 3 New Inn Broadway, looking west

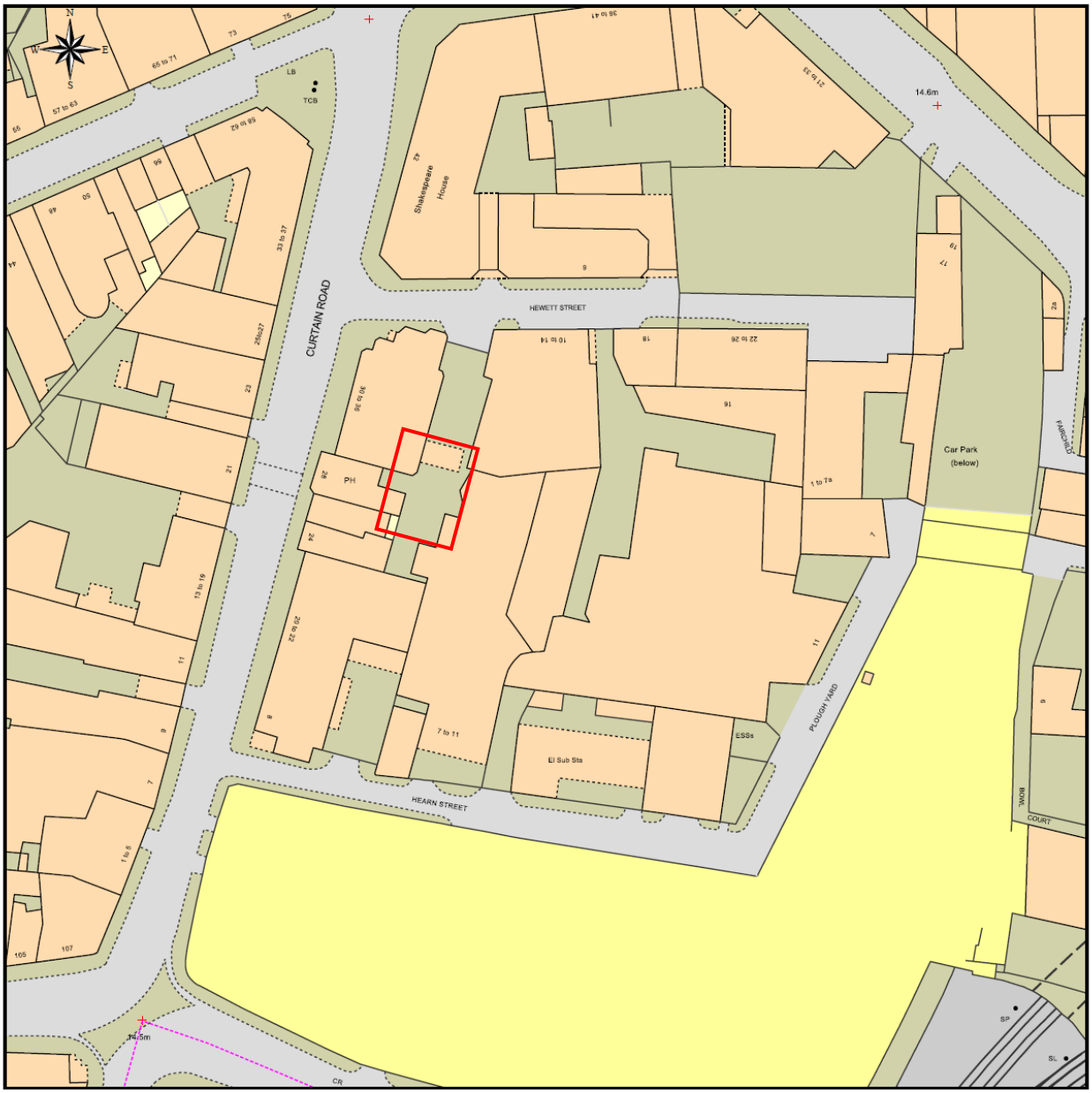
3a New inn Broadway, looking west

4 - 6 New Inn Broadway

Appendix 6

The Curtain Playhouse

Site location map and photographs



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Scale: 1:1250, paper size: A4

Site location of the Curtain Playhouse (playhouse location approximate only)

Looking south from Hewett Street towards the rear of 30 - 36 Curtain Road

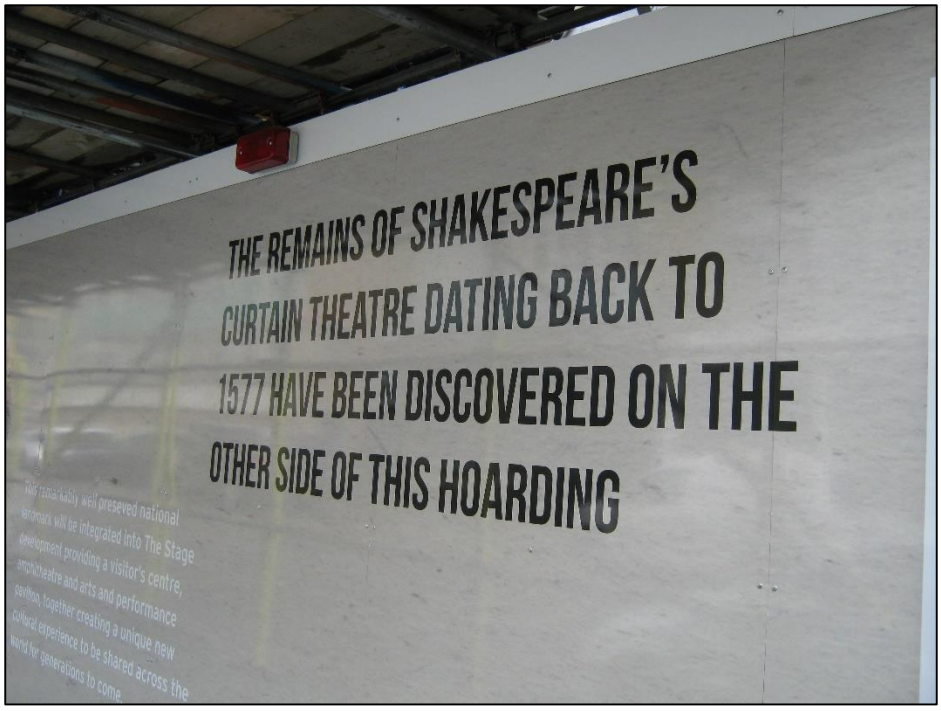
Looking south from Hewett Street into The Stage development site

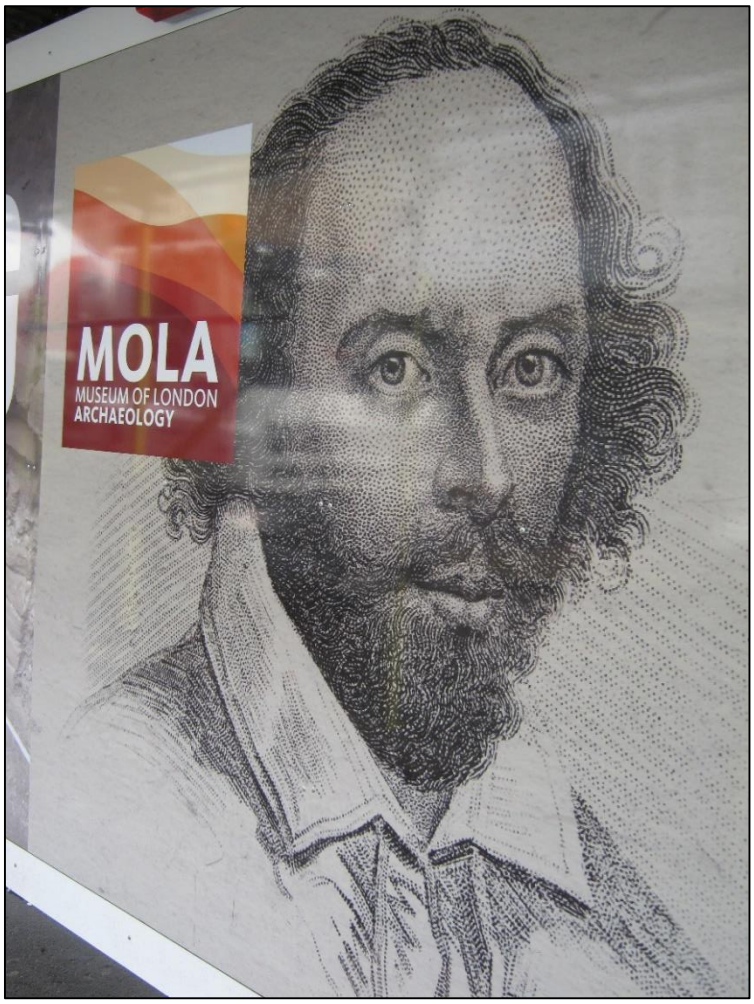
30 - 36 Curtain Road, looking east

Looking north on Curtain Road, with The Stage development site to the right (east)

The Horse and Groom public house, 28 Curtain Road

Nos. 24, 26 and 28 Curtain Road





Hoarding signage on The Stage development site